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LITTLE PILGRIMAGES

Among the Women Who Have Written

FAMOUS BOOKS

by

E. F. HARKINS

and

C. H. L. JOHNSTON

Illustrated

BOSTON

L. C. PAGE & COMPANY

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PREFACE

THE purpose of this book is to renew an intimate acquaintance with the women whom the American reading public regards as favorites, and to establish a like intimate acquaintance with the promising newcomers. The story-writers included in the list represent all sections of the country; but this circumstance is quite accidental. Although it happily suits the scheme of the book, it stands first of all as a proof that the women whom the reading public honors are the products of many cities and of widely differing environments.

There has been no hesitation about including a resident of England, Mrs. Craigie (John Oliver Hobbes), in the list, for she was born in America and loves no other

land so deeply; nor have such favorites as Frances Hodgson Burnett and Amelia E. Barr been excluded, for, although of foreign birth, they have long considered themselves Americans. On the other hand, the fact that the book deals with the writers of stories, long and short, and not with poets, has necessitated the exclusion of favorites like Mrs. Julia Ward Howe and Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton.

The sketches are partly critical and partly biographical. They are the result of efforts to inform as well as to entertain.

To many members of this gifted company the authors of "Little Pilgrimages" owe thanks for much new and valuable information and for numerous other courtesies extended during the preparation of the volume.

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ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS (WARD)

A STRANGER who came from some far western village and was making a first visit to Boston, is said to have thus addressed the bar-tender of an exclusive hotel: "Excuse me, but I am a stranger in this part of the country, and I want to ask you a question. Everywhere I go I see posters up like this: 'The Gates Ajar! The Gates Ajar!' I'm sick to death of the sight of the durn thing; I have n't darst to ask what it is. Do tell a feller! Is it a new kind of drink?"

Such, indeed, may be called true, though unsolicited fame, and such was the popularity of Mrs. Ward's first novel of any pretensions, a popularity which returned a sale of nearly one hundred thousand copies

in America, and was outrun by that in Great Britain. This, when compared with the enormous issues of popular fiction of the present day, does not, of course, seem extraordinary, but at the moment (1869) it was an almost unprecedented literary triumph. Translations were manifold. In France, Germany, Holland and Italy they appeared, yet from the inadequate copyright laws which then existed in this country, the just and honest rewards which were due the brilliant author were never received.

Perhaps the most interesting edition of the book was a "sickly yellow thing," says Mrs. Ward, "covered with a canvas design of some kind, in which the wings of a particularly sprawly angel predominate. The print is abhorrent, and the paper such as any respectable publisher would deserve to be condemned for in this world and in

that to come. In fact, the entire book was thus given out by one of the most enterprising of English literary pirates as an advertisement for a patent medicine. I have never traced the chemical history of the drug, but it has pleased my fancy to suppose it to be the one in which Mrs. Holt, the mother of Felix, dealt so largely, and whose sales Felix put forth his mighty conscience to suppress."

Previous to the appearance of this study of life actual and eternal, the existence of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps had indeed been a busy and intellectual one, yet similar to that of many a New England girl whose parents were of superior moral and intellectual fibre. It was the instinctive and inborn spark of genius which prompted the daughter of a hard-worked and overburdened New England professor to pen a work at twenty years of age which showed

a depth of insight and sympathy with the sorrows of life of one of twice her experience.

She was born in Andover, Massachusetts, on August 31, 1844, and inherited the keenest and most artistic literary talent from both her parents. Although "everybody's mother is a remarkable woman," Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, the mother, was a reconciliation of tact and power between genius and domestic life, a similar representation of which is seldom met with. A devoted, affectionate guardian and worthy adviser, she still found time to pen a number of stories for other people's children, which gave her a wider audience than that of her own hearth, and one that clamored with greater eagerness for further productions of her delicate imagination. The author of "Sunnyside," "The Angel on the Right Shoulder," and "Peeps at Num-

ber Five," was a rare woman of great intellectual gifts, who did not allow the keen pleasure of writing to overbalance the stern duties of motherhood.

Austin Phelps, the father, was Professor of Rhetoric in the Theological Seminary — a man of broad sympathies and with literary gifts of marked power. His "Still Hour" is yet read, while his Andover lectures, which in book-form have become classics, stand without peers to-day, and are the accepted text-books of his department. His appreciation of the uses and graces of language "very early descended like a mantle" upon the shoulders of his daughter. She learned to love reading, not because she was made to, but because she could not help it. The atmosphere she breathed was that of literature, and only that of the best.

At the age of thirteen her first literary

effort was sent to the *Youth's Companion*, and was accepted. At the time she was a small, rather angular person, usually attired in a high-necked gingham dress, not in the least precocious, and very much of a tom-boy into the bargain. Far more likely, in fact, to be found on the top of an apple tree or walking the length of the Seminary fence than writing rhymes or reading "solid reading." "The story was about a sister who neglected her small brother, and hence defeated the first object of existence in a woman-child. It was very proper, very pious, and very much like what well-brought-up little girls were taught to do, to be, to suffer, or to write in those days." For this effort the paper which had printed her contribution appeared in the Andover post-box for a year, and addressed to the writer of the published semi-column.

The stimulating influences within the

great white house with its intellectual inmates, and the very atmosphere of Andover itself, were not long in fostering renewed desires for literary triumphs. The country was soon upon the eve of a great conflict, and the fierce, eddying tide in Virginia caught with it many of the fair young forms intimate with the peaceful village life. The departure of friends and acquaintances in their rough clothes of blue made a great impression upon the receptive mind of the timid girl, and her own feelings of sorrow, together with a knowledge of the mental sufferings of others who remained at home, soon found voice in what might justly be called her first literary venture — a story of the war which appeared in *Harper's Magazine*, and for which she received a cheque for twenty-five dollars. This was in January, 1864, and its name, "A Sacrifice Consumed." The narrative

was of a poor and plain little dressmaker who lost her lover in the army. It was a simple tale, but full of that delicate and sympathetic appreciation of womanly sorrow which Mrs. Ward is able to portray with greater truthfulness, perhaps, than any living American author. Her father read it in printed form — she had not shown it to him before — and his genuine emotion gave her a "kind of awed elation which has never been repeated in her experience."

She now was launched upon the sea of literary venture, and wrote with a distinct purpose and quite steadily, contributing stories of various lengths to the different magazines with marked success, although she herself confesses that, had her first contribution been refused, or even the second, or the third, she would not have written again. Discovering soon enough that one cannot live by bread or by magazine stories

alone, like many another who toils in the ways of this most unremunerative of all professions, she did hack work and Sunday-school books by the score. The appearance of a little story called "The Tenth of January," which was founded upon the wreck of the Pemberton Mills at Lawrence, and upon which she spent nearly a month of preparation, distinctly marked the first recognition she received from literary people. The catastrophe upon which this sketch was founded had indeed been a terrible one. At five o'clock one January afternoon, when all hands were upon duty, the roof, the walls, and machinery of a great building, crowded with working-men and women, had given way and fallen with crushing weight upon the bodies of seven hundred living human beings. Fire, fierce and uncontrollable, had added to the horror, and the plight of the poor working girls who,

caught within the ruins beyond all hope of escape, went to their death with the songs of those hymns they had learned at church upon their lips, made an impression, not only upon the author but upon all who had seen and heard, which was as indelible as a mark upon marble that years alone can erase. For the best part of a month she investigated every avenue of information which might throw some light upon the tragedy, even to consulting engineers, physicians, officers, and newspaper men, and making a complete study of all files of local newspapers with articles bearing upon the tragedy, so that whatever she had to say would be from the fullest and most complete knowledge. Then the story was written. After its perusal, the poet Whittier wrote her his first letter and said enough to keep up the courage of the youthful aspirant to literary fame, a letter which to a self-distrustful nature like

her own, was as stimulating as a life-preserving tonic.

The inspiration for her next book, "The Gates Ajar," came spontaneously. The angel in her said, "Write!" and she wrote. She says: "The book grew so naturally, it was so unpremeditated, it came so plainly from the something not one's self which makes for uses in which one's self is extinguished, that there are times when it seems to me as if I had no more to do with the writing of it than the bough through which the wind cries, or the wave by means of which the tide rises." Its composition consumed the greater part of two years, years when the country was permeated with the spirit of a general grief. The regiments were returning with depleted ranks, the streets were dark with sorrowing women, the gayest scenes were black with crape, — in truth, a world of woe into which her book stole

forth, trembling. "It was written to comfort some few of the women whose misery crowded the land — the helpless, outnumbering, unconsulted women, they whom war trampled down without a choice or protest; the patient, limited, domestic women, who thought little but loved much, and, loving, had lost all" — to them she wished to speak. The success of her efforts was marvellous, although a storm of criticism was called forth, both favorable and unfavorable to the spirit that dared to produce a conception of the future life which was foreign to all preconceived ideas.

From the time of its publication to the present day, Mrs. Ward has conversed through the medium of her many works to an ever-appreciative and enlarging audience. Beneath her writing there is a distinct moral purpose, so that it does not appeal perhaps to some critics who hold fast to the

belief that nothing is worthy of high praise unless it is written "for art's sake alone." This idea she has always sacrificed to the moral influence with which it was her earnest desire to impregnate the pages of whatever story she has endeavored to tell, for her every production has been with the idea of helping those who read. She believes the old rhetorical law that a high and noble subject should be more worthy of a high and noble medium of art than a low one, and that it is not necessarily inartistic to do a good and helpful thing, provided the medium through which it reaches others is not wholly and distinctly bad.

In 1888 she was married to the Rev. Herbert D. Ward, with whom two of her more recent novels have been written. They are "The Master of the Magicians" and "Come Forth." Perhaps her most popular production, at the present time of

writing, is "A Singular Life," published in 1896, but that which she regards as her most important work, "The Story of Jesus Christ," was published in the fall of 1897. These have, for the most part, been written in an unpretentious but attractive house at Newton Centre, where is her winter home. In summer, she has for many years been an ever-welcome and appreciative visitant of Eastern Point, Gloucester, where her work in favor of the great cause of temperance among the fisher folk of the sea-faring town nearby, has greatly endeared her to the native born and stimulated them with a love and respect that is universal and sincere. Her "Story of Jack," a young fisherman who ruined his life and met his death through drink, is perhaps one of the best appeals for temperance that has yet appeared. At present she is much interested in the anti-vivisection

movement, and is spending much time and energy in its behalf.

As a literary artist of the most successful type who can well speak with a tone of authority, it is of importance and great interest to learn her views and comments upon those who contemplate a literary career: "Write if you *must*, not otherwise," she says. "Do not write if you can earn a fair living at teaching or dressmaking, at electricity or hod-carrying. Make shoes, weed cabbages, survey land, keep house, make ice-cream, sell cake, climb a telephone pole. Nay, be a lightning-rod peddler or a book agent before you set your heart upon it that you shall write for a living. Do anything honest, but do not write, unless God call you and publishers want you and people read you and editors claim you. Respect the market laws. Lean on nobody. Trust the common sense of an experienced

publisher to know whether your manuscript is worth something or nothing. Do not depend on influence. Editors do not care a drop of ink for influence. What they want is good material, and the fresher it is, the better. An editor will pass by an old writer any day for an unknown and gifted new one with power to say a good thing in a fresh way. Make your calling and election sure. Do not flirt with your pen. Emerson's phrase was, 'toiling terribly.' Nothing less will hint at the grinding drudgery of a life spent in living 'by your brains.'"

FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT.

FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT (MRS. TOWNSEND)

BY the name of Frances Hodgson Burnett she is still known, although early in 1900, in Genoa, Italy, she became Mrs. Stephen Townsend.

Generally, too, she is thought of as an American, while, as a matter of fact, she is English by birth. However, during the greater part of her life she has been an American in sympathy, as well as in residence; it is America which has awarded her the highest praise as a woman and the heartiest applause as an author; it is American incidents which constitute the subject of her most ambitious novel; it was at an American university that her son Vivian was educated; and numerous other ties have made her sufficiently American

to warrant giving her a place in this book. As a writer said a few years ago "Americans regard Mrs. Burnett as a countrywoman."

Mrs. Burnett was born in Manchester, England, on November 24, 1849. Her father, who was a well-to-do merchant, died when she was ten years old; and not long after the father's death the Hodgson's moved to Tennessee, whither an uncle of Frances had preceded them. But even before leaving England the little girl's remarkable powers of observation had been put into practice. The story goes: the English home of the Hodgsons was in Islington Square, and in the rear of it, at the end of the yard, was an alley on which were the homes of working people. Through the bars of an iron gate, as a little child, Frances watched the people who lived in the alley. One day, when the little

Hodgson girl was only nine years old, she saw the face of the girl whom she afterward called "That Lass o' Lowrie's." She saw the lass only twice. Once the little thing was in the midst of a group of children, knitting away and moving among them with an authoritative air; the second time the lass was retreating home, proudly yet obediently, before a coarse and brutal father.

Upon reaching America the Hodgsons settled in Knoxville, but the War of the Rebellion ruined the uncle's business, and so the mother gathered her two sons and three daughters about her and went to live in a log cabin in the country. At that time, Frances, according to a friend who has known her from childhood, was "a bright girl of fourteen, who had been carefully educated in a private school, was thoroughly grounded in her English studies,

spoke French fluently, and was a good musician." This same friend, by the way, assures us that "Frances was able to read by the time she was three years old, and before she was five she was writing little stories in her copy-book. She produced the greatest quantity of this sort of literature before she was twelve, but when it was decided that they were to come to America, Frances, with the courage of a Spartan, made a holocaust of the small library."

The misery into which the Hodgson's were thrown, first by an unprofitable settlement of the father's estate and afterwards by the adversity of the uncle, acted as a heavy strain upon Mrs. Hodgson, who, the daughter of a cotton manufacturer of large means, had been reared in luxury; and at the end of a few years the strain proved her death.

But, meantime, the children took up hard work enthusiastically. Frances got a

position as a school teacher. The parents of the children whom she taught paid her in eggs, flour, bacon, potatoes and other country produce; and on this primitive kind of salary the family subsisted. "They were not an unhappy family even then," says a witness of their struggles, "though the boys had to undertake work of a humble and laborious sort, and their whole existence was one of dire toil and deprivation. They were jolly young people who, when work was over, had concerts together, each playing a different instrument; and all of them were fond of books, of which they managed by hook or by crook to possess themselves."

Frances's hobby was story-writing, to quote what an intimate acquaintance of the author wrote when Mrs. Burnett first moved to Washington; "We can well imagine no day dreary and no evening long

in that household, a circle which in later years has become familiar through her pen as 'Vagabondia.' The first essay at a story that might go beyond the approving audience of 'Vagabondia' was attempted in her thirteenth year; written and *read*, not told, to her two sisters when she was nearly fifteen. Edith, the younger member of the household, saw practical financial results in this production and promptly advised sending it where such things were paid for. The young author was startled at the proposal, though doubtless her mind had already awakened to the possibilities of a future success, if not fame. The only difficulty to the younger sister's mind seemed to be postage stamps; neither had the nerve to ask the head of the family, the elder brother, for the few pennies, lest the shy maiden and her aspirations should become the subject of ridicule. The difficulty was

overcome by the Betsey Trotwood of the family, as Edith was significantly called, who proposed that they should gather a basket of wild grapes from a neighboring wood and the lucre thereby obtained should be used to send the precious manuscript to *Ballou's Magazine*."

And to that basket, we may remark hangs a romantic tale. But, first, let the other story go on;

"The answer was gratifying and complimentary, but the offer was to publish the story without remuneration. It was far more than the young writer had expected, but it was not satisfactory to Trotwood, who sagely remarked that "if it was worth praising it was worth paying for"; so by request it was returned. Then it was sent to *Godey's Lady's Book*, whose editor not only accepted it, but also several other manuscripts, on fair terms, thereby having the

distinction of first giving encouragement to a pen that has won a world-wide recognition. Later Miss Hodgson became a regular contributor to *Peterson's Magazine.* . . . Mr. Peterson not only was publisher, but became an interested personal friend. To him, more than to anyone else, she feels indebted for the encouragement that induced her to continue in the arduous work."

Once Mrs. Burnett was trapped — we use the expression advisedly, for she seldom unearths the past — into a reminiscent mood, and she gave virtually the same version of her first experience with publishers. The story was "Miss Carruther's Engagement." Mr. Ballou said it was a good story, but that he could not afford to pay for it. So at the author's request, he returned it. Finally it reached *Godey's.*

"Their readers," says Mrs. Burnett, "doubted its orginality, and Mr. Godey

wrote me that he liked the story, and if I could prove that it was original he would pay me twenty dollars for it and that I might set about writing another at once. I wrote in reply, showing them that the story was undoubtedly my own, and to prove it sent them another, called 'Hearts and Diamonds' and for the two I got thirty-five dollars."

"Do you remember your sensations on seeing your first story in print?" Mrs. Burnett was asked.

"Yes, I can," she answered. "I know I read the story over and over again, and it seemed much more interesting and better than it did in manuscript. The money I got seemed to be a great deal, and I felt that my vocation in life was fixed; and, indeed, I have been writing from that day to this."

The old files have been ill-kept, and we have not been able to trace the author's career back farther than a story called

"Ethel's Sir Launcelot," which appeared in *Peterson's* in November, 1868.

The acceptance of "Miss Carruther's Engagement" and "Hearts and Diamonds" certainly did fix their author's vocation, as the reading world knows; but let us go back to the basket of fruit that the Hodgson sisters picked that memorable day. The fruit was sold to the mother of a young man named Burnett — Swan Moses Burnett; to which young man in 1873, after he had taken his degree as Doctor of Medicine, Frances Eliza Hodgson was married. He was twice Miss Hodgson's age. It is said that in Mrs. Burnett's "Lass o' Lowrie's" may be found a "spiritual description of him as he first appeared to her. The hero with the crippled arm was in real life so crippled, that he was obliged to walk with one knee stiffened, using the toe of his foot to step upon. His face, while

having somewhat of the painful expression of a physical sufferer, possessed in a high degree the beauty of intelligence. Its expression was sensitive, sympathetic, and, above all, intellectual. All these qualities distinguished the young man. Observation was habitual with him, and, at first, he became interested in the girl merely out of curiosity. She attracted him even more by her brightness than by her prettiness."

They were married in 1873 and divorced in 1898. They had two children, Lionel, who died in Paris ten years ago of consumption, and Vivian, who is the subject of his mother's most popular story, "Little Lord Fauntleroy." It is a curious circumstance that the petition for the divorce of the Burnetts was filed the day Vivian came of age. Yet the doctor, who, by the way, is a celebrated eye specialist, and his gifted wife, were uncommonly devoted to each other in

the early days of their romance, as we shall see.

After Frances's literary bow the Hodgsons prospered. They were able soon to move into a pretty, vine-covered house, which, at the young author's suggestion, they significantly called Mt. Ararat. Just after Frances's engagement to Dr. Burnett, Mrs. Hodgson died, and for some time literature and domestic economy were in each other's way. But one of the Hodgson boys married a sister of Dr. Burnett, and, relieved of her new burden, Frances, already well-known as the author of "Surly Tim's Troubles" (*Scribner's*, 1872), visited England. Upon her return she and the ambitious young doctor were made husband and wife. But of what avail was his ambition without the means of satisfying it? So his wife, in a little more than one year, wrote three novels; then the Burnetts —

Lionel had been born — moved to Paris. There Vivian, the second son, was born. When the doctor had completed his studies the family came back to this country and settled down in Washington. There Dr. Burnett still lives. He is spoken of by his friends as a kind and brilliant man.

"That Lass o' Lowrie's" was planned during Mrs. Burnett's visit to Manchester just before her first marriage, and was published in 1877. So discriminating a critic as Richard Grant White referred to the story as "the flower and crown of all recent fiction." That and "Pretty Polly Pemberton" and "The Fire at Grantley Mills" were the tales which met the expenses of the journey to Paris.

One of her novels, "A Fair Barbarian," was the first work of an American romancist to receive the compliment of publication in the *Century* after it had been published

in another magazine — *Peterson's*. The success of "Little Lord Fauntleroy," by far the most popular of the author's works, and, in truth, one of the most popular bits of fiction ever written, has barely faded, although it was achieved in 1886. The dramatization of the story alone brought Mrs. Burnett a handsome fortune. It was the talk of the literary world when the graduate of the Tennessee log cabin bought herself a palatial house on Massachusetts Avenue, Washington. The success of "A Lady of Quality," both as a novel and as a play, added another heap to the novelist's gold; and then she took a house in Portland Place, London, and a magnificent country seat, Maytham Hall, Rolvendon, Kent. She and Mr. Townsend collaborated in the dramatization of "A Lady of Quality." Mr. Townsend is also the author of a novel, "A Thoroughbred Mongrel."

Up to date, Mrs. Burnett's — or Mrs. Townsend's — great disappointment has been the comparative failure of "The De-Willoughby Claim." "I now look upon it," she said, before it was published a couple of years ago, "as my greatest work, and what I hope to make the great American novel." It was brushed aside by greater American novels, and some of Mrs. Burnett's oldest friends among the critics, scolded her for it.

Mrs. Burnett's new book, "The Making of a Marchioness," appears too late for our criticism. We understand that the author is at work on two other novels, at least one of which will be published next year.

"Hard mental work," says one who saw her lately, "has not left marks with Mrs. Burnett. She is as rosy and young-looking as she was fifteen years ago, with the same tawny hair and the same baby-like eyes."

Rosy then, and young-looking still, rich, happy in a new-found love, somewhat eccentric, enjoying praise — such is Mrs. Burnett to-day.

SARAH ORNE JEWETT.

SARAH ORNE JEWETT

ONCE upon a time some critic found a resemblance between Miss Jewett and one of the old Flemish painters — found a resemblance between her stories and the groups of Jan van Eyck or Roger van der Weyden. He was a discerning critic, for her stories and the old masters' pictures are alike in many respects. They have a reality that is quite photographic, and yet they suggest a strong imagination. Their purity is remarkable, and yet their atmosphere is very earthly.

Better still, however, it seems to us, it would be to say that there is a strong resemblance between Miss Jewett and Jean Francois Millet. They both have dignified the meek and the lowly; they both

have exhibited the tenderest sympathy with the plain sons of Adam and Eve that live far from the madding crowd; they both have done this noble and ennobling work enthusiastically yet unaffectedly, modestly but, ah! how artistically. They that take pleasure in "The Angelus," will take pleasure also in "Deephaven." Millet, too, knew his characters intimately; he had struggled and suffered like them. From such painful strenuousness Miss Jewett fortunately has been able to keep aloof, for Barbizon is not like South Berwick, and the French peasants would say that the countryfolk of Maine lived royally. But we have heard it said that Miss Jewett is like her books, and that in ten minutes she unconsciously tells you how she writes them.

Kate Sanborn once essayed a description of her friend and contemporary, in

which she observed: "I feel a certain shrinking from attempting a personal sketch of this gifted woman, whom we all love for her absolutely perfect pictures of New England life." Anyone who essays the description must feel as Kate Sanborn felt, and yet, in such a case, a sketch poorly or inadequately done is better than no sketch at all. The lesson will be present, if not the eloquence. The old Flemish painters made portraits of themselves, but as yet, we hardly need say, Miss Jewett has given us no sketch of herself.

Sarah Orne Jewett was born at South Berwick, Maine, on September 3, 1849. Her father was Dr. Theodore Herman Jewett, a physician of no small renown; her mother was the daughter of Dr. Perry of Exeter, another physician well-known in central New England during the middle of the last century. The house in which she

was born is still standing, although it was built far back in the eighteenth century, and it still excites the author's warmest affection. "I was born here," she said, as she stood in its panelled hall a few years ago, "and I hope to die here, leaving the lilac bushes still green and growing, and all the chairs in their places."

You will meet glimpses of Miss Jewett's father in "A Country Doctor," but the nearest and clearest glimpse is in his daughter's personal sketch of him:

"My father had inherited from his father an amazing knowledge of human nature, and from his mother's French ancestry that peculiarly French trait called *gaieté de cœur*. Through all the heavy responsibilities and anxieties of his busy professional life, this kept him young at heart and cheerful. His visits to his patients were often made delightful and refreshing

to them by his kind heart, and the charm of his personality. I knew many of the patients whom he used to visit in lonely inland farms or on the sea-coast in York and Wells. I used to follow him about silently, like an undemanding little dog, content to follow at his heels. I had no consciousness of watching or listening, or indeed of any special interest in the country interiors. In fact, when the time came that my own world of imagination was more real to me than any other, I was sometimes perplexed at my father's directing my attention to certain points of interest in the characters or surroundings of our acquaintances. I cannot help believing that he recognized, long before I did myself, in what direction the current of purpose in my life was setting. Now as I write my sketches of country life, I remember again and again the wise things he

said, and the sights he made me see. He was impatient only with affectation and insincerity."

Miss Jewett was a delicate child, and, consequently, was encouraged by her father to spend much of her time outdoors; and outdoors she formed her extraordinarily intimate acquaintance with nature and with the inhabitants of the Agamenticus region. She played even more eagerly than did the other children of the town, but when she went to school she readily outstripped her classmates. It is said that at the academy she found verse easy and prose difficult, but such conditions are not unusual. Youth takes naturally to rhymes and to games.

Once someone inquired of the author of "A Country Doctor" when the literary bent took possession of her. "I can scarcely say anything about that," she answered,

"for I began to write so early. But my first serious encouragement was the acceptance of a short story by *The Atlantic Monthly* when I was between nineteen and twenty years old." That story was "Mr. Bruce," published in December, 1869.

We believe that Miss Jewett was about fourteen when she wrote "Lucy Garron's Lovers." Between that age and the age when she was welcomed to *The Atlantic Monthly* she published little sketches in *Young Folks* and in *The Riverside*. Her first great popular success was "Deephaven," which appeared in 1877.

"Popular success" however, hardly expresses the reception of "Deephaven." "Artistic success" might be a fitter expression. The fact is, Miss Jewett's works are not popular, as Miss Johnston's, say, are popular. James Russell Lowell used the right words when, shortly before his death,

he wrote to the London publishers of the New England author's books: "I am very glad to hear that Miss Jewett's delightful stories are to be reprinted in England. Nothing more pleasingly characteristic of rural life in New England has been written, and they have long been valued by the judicious here."

The same might be said to-day — "they have long been valued by the judicious here." No writer has a more devoted, more admiring public than the Bostonian. For we may call her a Bostonian, notwithstanding her loyalty to Berwick, or Barwick, as the natives say. During the last quarter of a century she has been the almost inseparable companion of Mrs. James T. Fields, who loves Boston no less than the "judicious" Bostonians love and respect her. Back in 1882 the serene and noble Whittier addressed a sonnet to them as

they set sail for Europe — a sonnet interesting to quote:

Outbound your bark awaits you. Were I one
Whose prayer availeth much, my wish would be
Your favoring trade wind and consenting sea.
By sail or steed was never love outrun,
And, here or there, love follows her in whom
All graces and sweet charities unite,
The old Greek beauty set in holier light;
And her for whom New England's byways bloom,
Who walks among us welcome as the spring,
Calling up blossoms where her light feet stray.
God keep you both, make beautiful your way;
Comfort, console and bless; and safely bring,
Ere yet I wake upon a vaster sea
The unreturning voyage, my friends to me.

Whittier was accustomed to attend Friends' meetings in Berwick, and it was in the old town that he, typical of the old

New England literary traditions, and Miss Jewett, the type of the newer, made each other's acquaintance! The sweet poet was greatly pleased by "Deephaven," and he heartily interested himself in its writers progress until he died.

Miss Jewett divides her time between Boston, Berwick and Manchester-by-the-Sea — the same Manchester that prompted Dr. Holmes to write "Beverly-by-the-Depot." The larger part of her literary work is done in the old Maine settlement, to whose name, by the way, no South was prefixed originally. Plain Berwick it was known as in the lively, picturesque days, when bronze-faced sailors rolled barrels of rum up and boxes of tobacco and stranger wares down the north Atlantic wharves. From one who visited her in Maine a few years ago we gather this description of the Jewett homestead:

"It seems as if one had no right to say so much about a house which is a home. And yet New England has few like this, and it is a part of her brave history. There are few such broad, high halls, arched and panelled; few such wide stairways with carved and polished railings, few such quaint gilded mirrors and antique portraits and last century bedsteads with white canopies. . . Behind the house is a big old-fashioned garden, and every room is sweet with posies. There is a stable, too, for Miss Jewett loves her horses, and drives almost daily over the green hills . . . of the beautiful coast of Maine. She is an oarswoman as well, and her boat knows every reach of the river and all its quiet sunlit groves. . . Miss Jewett's "den" is the most delightful I have ever seen. It is in the upper hall, with a window looking down upon a tree-shaded village street. A desk

strewn with papers is on one side, and on the other a case of books and a table. Pictures, flowers and books are everywhere. The room set apart for the library is one of the four great square ones downstairs. But the books overflow it. They lie upon the sofas, and have shelves in the bedrooms. It is the house of a woman who studies, Scott, particularly. . . "The busier I get," she said, "the more time I make to read the Waverley novels."

Mention of the "den" brings us up to Miss Jewett's method of working. She has moods; she does not make writing a set daily task, with so many pages to be done at a certain hour, as a Haverstraw laborer would have so many bricks. We have heard it said that sometimes her day's work amounts to eight or ten thousand words. That indeed would be a prodigious effort. Marion Crawford is one of the swiftest

writers we ever heard of, and his ordinary limit is six thousand words a day. Possibly the truth about Miss Jewett's industry has been exaggerated. More reasonable is the statement that while engaged on a novel she pens from two to four thousand words a day. Between books she enjoys periods of physical recreation and literary construction.

"Of your own books, which do you like best?" Miss Jewett was once asked.

"They're a pretty large family now," and she smiled. "There are always personal reasons, you know, and associations that may influence one's judgment. I don't think I have a favorite. In some ways I like 'A Country Doctor' best, and yet I believe 'A Marsh Island' is a better story."

Her latest work, "A Tory Lover," was concluded in *The Atlantic Monthly* last

August, two months after Bowdoin College had bestowed upon her the degree of Doctor of Letters.

"I have only written," she said to a literary brother a few years ago, "about what I knew and felt. In giving any idea of the influences which have shaped my literary life, I must go back to the surroundings of my childhood, and to those friends who first taught me to observe and to know the deep pleasures of simple things, and to be interested in simple and humble lives. I was born in an old colonial house in South Berwick, which was built about 1750. My grandfather had been a sea-captain, but retired early and engaged more or less in the flourishing shipping trade of that time. This business in all its branches, was still in existence in my early childhood, and so I came into contact not only with the farming and up country people,

but with sailors and shipmasters and lumbermen as well. I used to linger about the country stores and listen to the shrewd and often witty country talk, and I delighted in hearing of the ships which came to port, and in seeing the sea-tanned captains, who sometimes dined with my grandfather and talked of their voyages and bargains at the Barbadoes and Havana. And so I came to know directly a good deal about a fashion of life which is now almost entirely a thing of the past in New England."

"Art, you know," she said to the same man, as they sat discussing her Yankee and Irish-American sketches, "always begins with a recognition of the grotesque and unusual in life — the mere superficial aspects of character and habit. All literature in the beginning is in relation to the lower forms of pictorial art — it views life from the pictorial side almost exclusively. As

art goes higher it recognizes facts, and then the pathetic in the ludicrous. The distinction of modern literature is the evocation of sympathy. . . . Plato said: 'The best thing that can be done for the people of a state is to make them acquainted with each other'; and that is what I conceive to be the business of a story writer."

Miss Jewett is rather tall and perfectly dignified, but her dignity is warmed by her uncommon graciousness and by the charming brightness of her face. As her father had, surely she also has this true French *gaieté de cœur*. It should by this time be hardly necessary to say that flashes of wit and wisdom characterize her conversation, and that, in short, she is one of the rarest ornaments of the most cultured circle of Boston society.

MRS. BURTON HARRISON.

MRS. BURTON HARRISON

ANYONE who has visited Virginia, and is at all intimate with its country life, can easily understand how the mind of a highly imaginative child would there be stimulated to the creation of fairy stories, by reasons as natural and instinctive as those which foster that early love for dolls of wood, of paper, or of plaster. Such was the beginning of Mrs. Burton Harrison's literary career, and these childish efforts were but the nucleus of other stories yet to come: stories which were to treat of more worldly individuals than fairies, but were to retain the freshness and charm of those earlier attempts, which would make them ever pleasing to a large and enthusiastic audience of well-cultivated

but critical Americans. The many beautiful and always gracious heroines of colonial Virginian life who are, at the present time, absorbing so much authorial ink, have, indeed, a twentieth-century prototype in Mrs. Burton Harrison. An aristocrat in every instance, of temperament as romantic as one could wish, yet not, as is usually the case, with an accompanying overbalance of unpracticality; with self-possession worthy of another century, when graciousness of manner was more fully cultivated than now, she possesses a combination of characteristics which are well divided against themselves, and which permeate her work with a peculiar flavor of artistic excellence. She is of medium height and of well-rounded figure. Her hair, of auburn, just escaping red, is tinged with gray. Her eyes are grayish blue, and not remarkable. Her features, though fairly regular, have no

particular claim to beauty. In fact, so little distinction is there in her personal appearance that the passer-by would not look a second time at the middle-aged woman in the simple attire, yet such is her mingled grace and charm of manner that to see and know is but to admire with ever-increasing appreciation.

As Constance Cary of Virginia she came of historic Anglo-Saxon blood, and passed her childhood in that distinctly romantic atmosphere of semi-feudalism which was typical of Virginian life before the war. Her colonial ancestor upon her father's side, Colonel Miles Cary, was a scion of the Carys of Devonshire, England, whose tombs are yet to be seen at the church at Clovelly, and whose present head is the Viscount Falkland. Emigrating to America, he settled in Virginia about the middle of the seventeenth century, and later became

a man of considerable prominence, for during the vigorous rule of Sir William Berkeley he was a member of the king's council. Her father was Archibald Cary, of Carysbrook, in Virginia, and the son of Virginia Randolph, the ward and pupil of Thomas Jefferson, and sister of his son-in-law, Thomas Mann Randolph. Visitors to Monticello are still shown the spot where Jefferson stood in giving his ward in marriage to his own nephew. Her mother was the youngest daughter of Thomas Fairfax, Baron of Cameron in the Scottish peerage, who resided upon a large plantation at Vaucluse, in Fairfax, Virginia, and there lived a retired and gentlemanly life. From her grandmother upon the father's side, Mrs. Wilson Jefferson Cary, a well-known and popular writer in her day, she may be said to have inherited her literary talent, although the Fairfax family was noted for

its appreciation of good literature. As a writer her father possessed considerable originality and force, and the influence of his great-uncle, Thomas Jefferson, the founder of American Democracy, is distinctly discernible in his political essays. Unfortunately he died while comparatively a young man, and his wife and small children lived in the seclusion of the family estate, not far from Arlington, where Constance Cary spent a happy childhood and youth, educated by her loving mother and a French governess, and delving with great constancy into the full-stocked family library of old, but well-chosen books.

When she was seventeen, her first story — a love story, of course — was sent to the *Atlantic Monthly*. It was lurid and melancholy, and was returned in due course of time with, "This is far better than the average, and should be read through," written

in very bright ink, and with a very large hand, across the first page. From this she inferred that only the first page had been read, and, strange as it may seem, even that gave her encouragement. Her next attempt was a highly-colored and sensational novel called "Skirmishing," which was destroyed in a fire, an event for which she has since had every reason to feel grateful.

The Civil War now temporarily ended her literary career, for the family left Vaucluse at the approach of the hostile armies, and passed through the Confederate lines at Manassas to friends and acquaintances upon the Southern side. Shortly afterwards their hospitable home was destroyed by the government engineers, during the construction of the chain of fortifications around Washington City, which were thrown up under the direction of General McClellan. The effect of this loss of home, coupled with the

other misfortunes which crowded upon Constance Cary at this period of her life, left a deep impression upon her sensitive nature. A shade of bitterness fostered by these events may be traced in some of her writings, most noticeably, perhaps, in "Flower de Hundred" and "Crow's Nest." But a long trip abroad with her widowed mother, and several years spent in European travel, not only made her forget in part the sorrows of the past, but furthered an education which was already of unusual completeness.

Soon after her return, Miss Cary was married to Burton Harrison, Esq., a prominent member of the New York bar, and, like his wife, also of an ancient and well-known Virginian family. The ceremony was performed at the picturesque St. Anne's Church, in Westchester County, New York, and the wedding breakfast was at

"Old Morrisana," the country home of her uncle, Gouverneur Morris.

"It was not until my return to America," she has said, "that I was bold enough to take up my pen. I wrote a little article, which I called 'A Little Centennial Lady.' It was published in *Scribner's Magazine*, and had so favorable a reception that I was encouraged to write 'Golden Rod,' a story of Mount Desert, which appeared in *Harper's Magazine*." These were quite widely read, and were soon followed by other efforts. Two spheres of life she felt well qualified to represent, and these only she has touched upon with success, although her latest novel has been of a distinctly different type. The South of her girlhood, which she knew so intimately, she has depicted with the true sympathy of the Southern born, while the whims and fallacies of that metropolitan society where Mammon wor-

ship is paramount, and mad scramble after place and leadership is all-absorbing, she has shown with a delicate appreciation that is unequalled. Of her own work, she has said: "My books I have enjoyed most, if a writer may enjoy her own work, have not been those dealing with New York social life, but my tales of the South. Charles A. Dana, of the New York *Sun*, was unconsciously responsible for my 'Old Dominion.' He gave me the agreeable task of editing the 'Monticello Letters,' and from them I gleaned a story which outlined my 'Old Dominion.' But the editors cry for stories of New York social life, to gratify the popular demand." And is it not human nature that the public should thus raise its voice? What interests the dweller in the tenth small cottage to the left of the grocery store in the New England village more than what the dweller in the second house

to the right of that same grocery is doing? Stories of a swell club, women's teas, and love's broken lances among the million-dollar endowed, serve but to satisfy the curiosity of those who live upon a higher social (not necessarily moral) plane than that of the country town. They cry for news of each other, and Mrs. Harrison has ably satisfied this want. "Her muse is not a winged Pegasus. It is a park cob," a clever New York reviewer has said, but Mrs. Harrison would have us think otherwise. "I am sorry I am so identified with society in the minds of readers. I would like to be thought of as a student of human, rather than of society, nature. It is circumstances that have made my outlook upon life what it is. I have an intense sympathy for the joys and sorrows of humanity, and the older I grow the more sorrows appeal to me. I see them in the

lives of my friends and write about them. The friends happen to be in society, so I am known as the society novelist or satirist."

There are two homes which are graced by the presence of this successful novelist, who is as competent a housekeeper as she is a brilliant member of society. The Harrison's winter house is a charming but unpretentious mansion on East Twenty-Ninth street, New York, the city of many more palatial, but few more attractive residences. "Sea Urchins" their summer cottage is at Bar Harbor, and is most picturesquely situated upon a high bit of ground near the sea. This, perhaps, is her favorite working place, and although she is a great traveller, and has been to nearly all the noted places in foreign lands, and to many which are seldom visited by the casual and unliterary tourist, yet she has confessed

that her happiest hours are spent in the bracing atmosphere which surrounds this northern dwelling.

Her first story of New York life, "Helen Troy," in 1881, was a tale of the society of her native town, and of the Berkshire Hills. "The Old-Fashioned Fairy Book," published in 1884, and "Bric-a-Brac Stories," one year later, gave her an enviable reputation as a writer for children, for they are as much read to-day as when first produced.

"Short Comedies for American Players," a translation and adaptation of several excellent plays of French authorship, was a departure from her usual field, but a successful one. Under her personal direction these plays were produced in both Lenox and New York, and netted an aggregate of about twenty thousand dollars for the different charities in whose behalf they were given. Next followed a number of histori-

cal papers upon colonial America. "The Fairfaxes in America," an article read before the New York Historical Society, June 2, 1888, was a truthful and vigorous historical essay of unusual attraction, on account of the grace of its artistic workmanship. A sketch of the life of "Colonel William Byrd of Westover," appeared some two years later and was equally well received.

In 1889, "The Anglomaniacs," caused a great stir in society. "It did not cause any personal stirring," she has said, "for all agreed that the Anglo-worshippers were not overdrawn. People criticized, but they never caught themselves in the act of Anglo-worshipping. They say their neighbors pay homage to the fetich and said, 'I believe these foolish people inspired Mrs. Harrison's work.' Oh, yes, I am quite safe and quite comfortable, I assure you.

My feet are planted on that basic rule of human nature, 'Discover the beam in your neighbor's eye, and don't look for the mote in your own.' Had that rule been reversed, I might have had some unhappy luncheon, tea, or reception memories, but after a quarter of a century of writing about society people and seeing that they will not discover themselves, I feel secure and impregnable in my fortress of criticism. My characters were taken from life, yes, indeed, but they are copied of types rather than individuals. That may be one of the reasons that I have not been persecuted by an angry original. Types, after all, are composites."

"Flower de Hundred," her next work, was set in Southern surroundings and was successful, although not to such an extent as the one preceding. "A Daughter of the South," which next appeared, was a

collection of her short stories, some of which had been published in magazine form. "Sweet Bells out of Tune," was followed by "A Bachelor Maid," which was condensed for Russian readers in a leading Russian magazine. "An Errant Wooing" was an interesting love story, and in this her knowledge of foreign life was well utilized. "The Merry Maid of Arcady," was followed by "Crow's Nest," which has brought the author more letters from all parts of the country, than any of her books, One was from a Western ranchman, and said: "Your book has gone the rounds, but it has always come back, and I have threatened to put a bullet in the hide of the man who does not return it." With this letter the author was greatly pleased. "The Circle of a Century" and "A Princess of the Hills" are two of her later books which have received very favorable comment,

although the latter is a complete departure from her ordinary scenes of action, and is a story of Italian life, and of a foreign environment which she has good reason to know with accuracy. Such a long list of publications bears full witness to the energy which has characterized her life. "I was made for action," she has said, "I cannot relax as so many do. I haven't the temperament and besides, there is so much to do. I would be unable to write did I not thoroughly believe in my characters. I am always living and observing a dozen lives. There is much satisfaction in doing work correctly. I am in love with mine, and am a hard worker. I would like to write something that every one would read, something powerful." Perhaps she may, such persistence and patient toil are worthy of accomplishing the desired end.

CHARLES EGBERT CRADDOCK.

CHARLES EGBERT CRADDOCK (MISS MURFREE)

ON March 4, 1885, the *Boston Evening Transcript* printed the following paragraph:

"Last evening Dr. Holmes and Mr. Howells received a genuine surprise at the hands of the editor of the *Atlantic*. Mr. Aldrich invited these gentlemen to dine with him, to meet Charles Egbert Craddock, the author of 'In the Tennessee Mountains,' 'Where the Battle was Fought,' and the remarkable novel now publishing in the *Atlantic* ("The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains"). The surprise lay in the fact that Charles Egbert Craddock is a pseudonym which for the past six years has veiled the identity of a very brilliant woman — Miss Mary N. Murfree of St. Louis."

Thus the curtain was rung down on one of the neatest comedies ever presented to the American reading public. And what a distinguished cast the comedy had!

It was in May, 1878, during the administration of Mr. Howells, that the readers of the *Atlantic* were treated to a most delightful, a most refreshing surprise, a story of the Tennessee Mountains, called "The Dancin' Party at Harrison's Cove," by a new author, Charles Egbert Craddock.

The quaint and unprecedented strain was noticeable in the first colloquial sentence:

"'Fur ye see, Mis' Darley, them Harrison folks over yander ter the cove hev' determinated on a dancin' party.'"

Mr. Howells was pleased with his discovery; the *Atlantic* readers — then the most critical literary company in America — hailed the coming of a promising author;

the professional critics hesitated at first and then echoed the popular applause.

Time passed, and Mr. Aldrich took Mr. Howells's chair in the *Atlantic* office, and one of the first official acts of the new editor was to write to Charles Egbert Craddock inviting more contributions. Then, pending an answer, he ordered in two Craddock stories that had been left over by reason of a superabundance of somewhat more important material.

The response to his invitation came in the shape of a series of as excellent American stories as ever was published — "The Star in the Valley," "The Romance of Sunrise Rock," "Over on the T'other Mounting," "The Harnt that Walks Chilhowee," "Electioneering on Big Injun Mounting," "A-Playin' of Old Sledge at Settlemint," and the exceptionally long and powerful "Drifting Down Lost

Creek," which ran through three numbers of the *Atlantic*. Later there appeared a novel, "Where the Battle was Fought," a work hardly worthy of its predecessors. In time the name of Charles Egbert Craddock was signed to three books: the novel just mentioned, a collection of short stories ("In the Tennessee Mountains"), and to "Down the Ravine," a tale for the young folks, in whom the author then took a lively interest. All in all, they were profoundly interesting stories, revealing a deep insight into the manners of the pent-up, ignorant, law-flaunting, hard-headed, and pure-hearted mountaineers. Palacio Valdes calls attention to that "beautiful spectacle" — a virginal man of eighty. John Fox, Jr., who has been walking in the footsteps of the author of "In the Tennessee Mountains," once said to us that he had met Southern mountaineers who, at thirty, were as chaste as angels.

But aside from the virility of the Craddock sketches, there were more substantial marks of the author's masculine sex. There was legal acumen, for instance, which led to the assumption that Craddock was a lawyer who turned to literature for recreation. And there was the bold, manly handwriting — inky handwriting — a bottle of ink to a page. So inky, indeed, that when Mr. Aldrich thought of asking the Southerner for a serial ("The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains") he remarked, "I wonder if Craddock has laid in his winter's ink yet; perhaps I can get a serial out of him."

It was already known on Park street, where the old-fashioned headquarters of the *Atlantic Monthly* are to be seen to-day, that Charles Egbert Craddock was the psuedonym of M. N. Murfree. "Ah! so his name is Murfree!" they were exclaiming.

Monday, March 2, 1885, brought three guests from St. Louis to Hotel Vendome, in Boston; and there they were registered as "W. L. Murfree, Sr." and "The Misses Murfree." But the literary world was still in a state of blissful ignorance.

"Last Monday morning (we quote from a contemporaneous account of the incident), as Mr. Aldrich was in the editorial room of the *Atlantic Monthly*, word was brought to him that a lady below wished to see him. He went down and met a pleasant young lady, who remarked that she was Charles Egbert Craddock. Mr. Aldrich could hardly have been more astounded had the roof fallen in, and he turned and ran several steps under the pressure of the shock, before he recovered his usually imperturbable presence of mind. He would have been better prepared to find under that name a strapping six-foot Tennesseean than the del-

icate looking lady before him. He now says he is inclined to doubt the sex of all the other *Atlantic's* contributors whom he has not met. There are certain things in George Eliot's writings which, now that one knows, one can clearly see could have been written only by a woman; but in the writings of Charles Egbert Craddock there is not the slightest trace of feminine influence. Dr. Holmes and Mr. Howells were equally astonished at meeting Mr. Craddock in Miss Murfree. Mr. Howells had written that he could not come, owing to another engagement, though he wished very much to 'meet Craddock,' but he was persuaded to come by Mr. Aldrich. On his way he called at a prominent publisher's, who said: 'Tell Craddock to drop around and see us.' It will hardly be a violation of privacy to say that the evening was a delightful one to all; that the chief guest was addressed as 'they'

by the host in recognition of the quality of Miss Murfree and Charles Egbert Craddock, while the hostess could not lose the latter name from mind, and compromised with 'Miss Craddock.'"

It is reasonable to inquire why the innocent deception was practiced for so long a time. The author's brother, William L. Murfree, Jr., once partly illuminated the matter. He said: "Mr. Aldrich and her publishers knew that Craddock was an assumed name, but never doubted that M. N. Murfree was a man. The *nom de plume*, her style of writing, and chirography, all contributed to this impression. The name was assumed as well for a cloak in case of failure as to secure the advantage that a man has in literature over a woman. He obtains a quicker reading by the publishers, is better received by the public in the beginning, and altogether has an easier time

of it. Accident led to the choice of the name, which had been much discussed in the family before being finally determined upon by her in the form used. Those portions of her writings which are called peculiarly masculine are not in any sense affectations. It was never doubted she was a man, and hence there was no reason for the adoption of disguise in writing. Each portion of her work was read to the family before being sent away, and, it may be, sometimes criticized as to some detail; she is too positive and painstaking to need or allow much interference in the plan or arrangement of her material."

Inexperience is the only excuse for the idea that prejudice against women exists among either the publishers or the people who read and love books. The proofs in opposition to this idea, especially in these days, are too numerous to present.

The pseudonym came to be chosen in this way : Egbert Craddock was the name of the hero of Miss Murfree's second story, which was only partly written when the time came to send the manuscript of the first story to the publishers. In doubt regarding what pen-name to adopt, Miss Murfree took the name of her new hero and prefixed Charles to it, just to give it the appearance of verisimilitude. All in all, it was a very happy choice — an inspired choice.

Mary Noailles Murfree was born at "Grantlands," near Murfreesboro, Tenn., in 1850. "Grantlands" was the family home, inherited from her great-grandfather, Col. Hardy Murfree, a gallant soldier of the Revolution, who, in 1807, moved from his native State of North Carolina to the new State of Tennessee, where he settled near the town that later was given

his name. Miss Murfree's father, William Law Murfree, was a lawyer by profession; her mother, was Priscilla, the daughter of Judge Dickinson. The names of both her father and her brother have a place in American literature. Mary exhibited "literary aspirations" even when, as a little girl, she went to school in Nashville; later she and her sister, Fannie, went to school in Philadelphia.

The Murfrees were hard hit by the War of the Rebellion; and their distress was emphasized by Mary's poor health. But the young woman showed a dauntless spirit. Quietly observant, keenly imaginative, and strongly inclined to write, she began to set down her impressions of the life about her, notably the life in the Tennessee mountains, where the family usually spent the summer. With what successful, — admirable results, the lovers

of American literature know full well. In 1881 the family moved to St. Louis; but Miss Murfree's present address is her native town in Tennessee.

She could not fairly be characterized as a dialect writer; her narration is generally excellent; and her power of description is especially praiseworthy. Note, for example, the life and the grace in the first lines of "The 'Harnt' that Walks Chilhowee":

"The breeze freshened, after the sun went down, and the hop and gourd vines were all astir as they clung about the little porch where Clarsie was sitting now, idle at last. The rain-clouds had disappeared, and there bent over the dark, heavily wooded ridges a pale blue sky, with here and there the crystalline sparkle of a star. A halo was shimmering in the east, where the mists had gathered about the great

white moon, hanging high above the mountains. Noiseless wings flitted through the dusk; now and then the bats swept by so close as to move Clarsie's hair with the wind of their flight. What an airy, glittering, magical thing was that gigantic spider-web suspended between the silver moon and her shining eyes! Ever and anon there came from the woods a strange, weird, long-drawn sigh, unlike the stir of the wind in the trees, unlike the fret of the water on the rocks. Was it the voiceless sorrow of the sad earth? There were stars in the night besides those known to astronomers: the stellular fireflies gemmed the black shadows with a fluctuating brilliancy; they circled in and out of the porch, and touched the leaves above Clarsie's head with quivering points of light. A steadier and an intenser gleam was advancing along the road, and the

sound of languid footsteps came with it; the aroma of tobacco graced the atmosphere, and a tall figure walked up to the gate."

Note — above the engaging swing of the words — the masculine touch, "the aroma of tobacco graced the atmosphere." Surely Mr. Aldrich and his associates, not to mention the readers of the *Atlantic*, were justified in thinking of "Mr. Craddock." And in the same story you will find another remarkably vivid picture, not large and overwhelming — that is not the author's style; but small and delicate, with all the scenery of a photograph but even a more impressive appearance of reality — the picture of Clarsie sitting at the window in the moonlight.

Miss Murfree's brother is our authority for the statement that "Her pictures of people are of types, not individuals; and

where it is thought an individual has been drawn, it is because that person possesses, in a large degree, the peculiarities of his class." The vital fact, however, is the author's success in portraiture; her skill in infusing vitality into her picturesque characters; her artistic employment of a cultivated imaginative temperament. Her natural gifts quite suit her choice of subjects, it might be said, superficially; but beneath the surface of her success is to be seen the artistry that adorns all subjects. She is an artist, as we would say of Miss Jewett or Miss Wilkins. Like them, she would successfully hold the mirror up to nature,—anywhere.

Personally, she is of medium height and slight form. Her features are prominent in a square and projecting forehead, large gray eyes, a deep-set Grecian nose, large mouth, and a chin that may be described

as accounting for her positiveness. On the whole, a pleasant, magnetic, impressive face. She converses vivaciously, and her friends say she is a captivating story-teller.

Her work is a valuable as well as entertaining contribution to American literature. Indeed, she has covered her field so well that any hope of improving upon her standard, or even of emulating it as laudably, is almost futile.

ANNA KATHARINE GREEN.

ANNA KATHARINE GREEN (MRS. ROHLFS)

IT is related that when "The Leavenworth Case" was published in 1878, the Pennsylvania Legislature turned from politics to discuss the identity of its author. There was the name on the title-page — Anna Katharine Green — as distinct as the city of Harrisburgh itself. But it must be a *nom de plume*, some protested. A man wrote the story — maybe a man already famous — and signed a woman's name to it. The story was manifestly beyond a woman's powers. Feminine names were considerably scarcer in the American fiction list then than they are to-day, when girls fresh from the high school take a place among the authors of the "best-selling" books.

A New York lawyer happened to be present at the politicians' discussion. "You are mistaken," he said to the incredulous. "I have seen the author of 'The Leavenworth Case' and conversed with her, and her name is really Miss Green."

"Then she must have got some man to help her," retorted the more obstinate theorists. They strongly remind us of the characters whom Miss Green — as we shall call her for the moment — portrays so skillfully, the self-willed characters that aim so well, but do not hit even the target, not to mention the bull's-eye.

The incredulity exemplified by the Pennsylvanians was natural enough. That an American woman in those days should venture into the field of romantic literature was so uncommon as to be noteworthy; but that an American woman

should write detective stories — well, that was quite preposterous.

And yet, nowadays, it would seem no more preposterous than a request to Mr. Carnegie to build a library. For the love of a good detective story, of a story interwoven with adventure and mystery, is in most persons a simple manifestation of the instinctive love of excitement. We know a professor — one of the most brilliant men in his profession — who has never lost his juvenile fondness for the pursuit of fire-engines. Similarly, many men and women are never cured of their youthful passion for the literature of the disguises and the handcuffs. Hawkshaw! How the name thrills even to-day! It takes many a man back to the days when the tattered dime-novel was smuggled into the schoolroom. Sometimes the almost breathless attention to syntax or the map

of the New England States betrayed the guilt; but we firmly believe that there were teachers who never confiscated those prizes.

But, measuring by the incessant changes in times and in manners, it is not difficult to understand that a quarter of a century ago the still conservative reading public was loth to believe that the author of "The Leavenworth Case" was a woman.

Anna Katharine Green, the woman in question, was born in Brooklyn, N. Y., on Nov. 11, 1846. She was thirty-two, therefore, it will be seen, when the story that made her famous was published. Her father was a well-known lawyer; indeed, the Greens, we have been told, were a family of lawyers. This may account for the skill with which the daughter has tied and cut Gordian knots. It unquestionably accounts for her nimble imagination,

her skill in producing subtle hypotheses and her strength in handling the most intricate psychological problems. In 1867 Anna was graduated from the Ripley Female College, in Poultney, Vt., and she may, if she please, write B.A. after her name. She composed verses and stories at the age of eleven. And speaking of verses, how many readers are acquainted with the fact that the author of "The Leavenworth Case" is also the author of a drama in blank verse and of a volume of ballads and narrative poems? Yet "The Defence of the Bride, and Other Poems" has won encomiums from discreet critics: and in some respects "Risifi's Daughter: A Drama," is her most ambitious work.

Perhaps, therefore, as we are to consider her poetry as an incidental, it may not be amiss at this point to quote a few charac-

teristic verses. The two stanzas which follow are taken from a poem entitled "At the Piano":

Play on! Play on! As softly glides
The low refrain, I seem, I seem,
To float, to float on golden tides,
By sunlit isles, where life and dream
Are one, are one; and hope and bliss
Move hand in hand, and thrilling, kiss
'Neath bowery blooms
In twilight glooms,
And love is life, and life is love.

Play on! Play on! As higher rise
The lifted strains, I seem, I seem
To mount, to mount through roseate skies,
Through drifted cloud and golden gleam,
To realms, to realms of thought and fire,
Where angels walk and souls aspire,
And sorrow comes but as the night
That brings a star for our delight.

Some of the criticisms of the book — "The Defence of the Bride, and Other Poems" — were extremely, and, indeed, rather

absurdly flattering; a moderately toned opinion was given in *Harper's Monthly:*

"The ballads and narrative poems which form the greater part of this collection are vigorous productions, whose barrenness of redundant words and epithets, and whose directness and straightforwardness of narration, are in strong contrast with the diffuse garrulity of most female writers. She has the true storyteller's faculty for investing what she has to say with interest, and for keeping expectation on the stretch; and she delivers her message with masculine force and brevity."

One of the critics, by the way, compared Miss Green — she was still Miss Green then, in 1882 — with Alfred Austin. "Miss Green," says the critic, "seems to be able to say delicate and graceful things as easily as does the English poet." That was before Mr. Austin became Poet Lau-

reate — before comparisons with him were particularly odious.

"Risifi's Daughter," we may say, in a word, is notable rather for its well-sustained dramatic strength than for any especial skill or grace of versification. It seems to have convinced its author that her lines might be cast in happier places.

But to return to the main road. We have already seen that as a girl Anna had literary aspirations, but they reached no serious stage of development until after her return from Ripley College. She felt drawn to literature, and yet she was in no hurry either to decide which of the divers literary fields was best suited to her taste and talent, or to see her name in print. At this critical time her father was friend and counsellor. He perceived that there was no fickleness back of his daughter's ambition to adopt literature as a profes-

sion; and, what is more important, he perceived that she might successfully qualify as a candidate. So he set about to direct and to encourage her zeal.

He found Anna a docile pupil. When doubts arose, when discouragement appeared, he was nearby to cheer her and to advise. He enlisted her sympathy in different cases that interested him; he sharpened her wits; he discoursed to her on his own interesting experiences; he contributed judicious criticisms; above all, he fostered her confidence in her own powers. In this way she acquired from her father gifts that she had not inherited from him. Hers was a remarkably well-equipped intellect before one of her books had been published.

"The Leavenworth Case" came to startle the reading public in 1878. The plot of the story had been in the author's mind for some years. The book, there-

fore, was no inspired or spasmodic effort; rather it was the product of a finely regulated intellect applied to the ever-entertaining theories of cause and effect. What if those legislators had been informed of the fact that the author was a student of criminology!

Mrs. Rohlfs is too adept a psychologist to pretend that instinct led her with the manuscript of "The Leavenworth Case" to Mr. G. P. Putnam's office; it was more likely a simple piece of good fortune to happen upon so wise and liberal an appraiser. It is a tribute to his perspicacity that he introduced to the American reading public one of its most popular writers, and it is a happy commentary on the relationship between author and publisher that, with an exception or two, the Putnam house has issued the periodical output of Anna Katharine Green.

When "A Strange Disappearance" appeared, in 1885, a critic — or perhaps we should say reviewer — made the comment: "We have a Gaboriau in our own tongue." It must have seemed extremely flattering — assuming that the author of "A Strange Disappearance" is normally susceptible to flattery — to be named favorably in the same sentence with the brilliant Frenchman. Mrs. Rohlfs resembles Gaboriau in so far as her strong point, as his was, is the simple and perspicuous narrative of events; thus, too, she resembles Wilkie Collins, who was called an imitator of Gaboriau. But we doubt that any pen excepting Gaboriau's could write or could have written the first part of "Monsieur Lecocq." Possibly the English writer thought he saw an imitator in the author of "The Leavenworth Case." At any rate, while she was enjoying the first fruits of

renown, Collins wrote to her publishers that he sincerely admired her stories; and we understand that he conveyed to the young American some "wise practical hints" and "warm expressions of belief in her future." The belief has been abundantly justified.

"It is said" — we quote from an anonymous paper dealing with the career of the New York author — "that she does not herself claim to be a novelist. She is not a novelist in the sense that George Eliot and Hawthorne are novelists." These words remind us of the reflections of Mr. Herbert Paul, the brilliant English essayist, on Collins's "Woman in White" and "Moonstone." "Are these books and others like them literature?" he asks. "Wilkie Collins deliberately stripped his style of all embellishment. Even epithets are excluded, as they are from John Austin's

'Letters on Jurisprudence.' It is strange that a man of letters should try to make his books resemble police reports. But, if he does, he must take the consequences. He cannot serve God and Mammon." The reflections, to some extent, may be applied direct to Mrs. Rohlfs's books, for they, too, are stripped almost bare of epithets. But if, as Mr. Crawford, for example, urges, if the first purpose of a novel is entertainment, then the books bearing the name of Anna Katharine Green are excellent novels. But it is not a point to be insisted upon. Let the statement suffice that the books in question, whatever be their true denomination, give rare pleasure. Fastidious critics, like Professor Bates of Wellesley, may classify them as police-court literature; but even in the police court is revealed the joy and the woe of human passions, the wonderful keenness and the terrible dullness of the

human intellect. Mrs. Rohlfs knows her limitations, and is content to be exalted or condemned by her performances.

Her manner of working takes us back to Charles Reade. "The account of any remarkable or strange event that comes to her attention in the reading of the newspapers she cuts out and pastes into a scrapbook. . . When the time comes to write out the plots which she has previously developed in her mind, she takes care to work only when she can work at her best. Sometimes she writes, therefore, two hours a day, sometimes ten; but there is none of that plan of persistent plodding, day in and day out, to produce a prescribed amount, which Anthony Trollope carried on so successfully." Yet in the twenty-three years covering her literary career she has written a score of books. This has been no light task for one with a

household to take care of, for in November, 1884, the novelist became Mrs. Charles Rohlfs. Some of the books have been translated into German and Swedish, which circumstance is a notable tribute to their attractiveness.

Technically, Professor Bates was justified in referring to Mrs. Rohlfs as "the foremost representative in America to-day of police-court literature"; yet to us this reference seems unsatisfactory, inadequate. It conveys no hint of the constructive skill, the imaginative power and the perceptive faculties necessary for the praiseworthy writing of police-court literature; and, furthermore, it offers no suggestion of Anna Katharine Green's exquisite sense of humor. How delightfully, for example, that most interesting spinster in "That Affair next Door" — Miss Butterworth, as we remember the name — plays hostess

for the Van Burnam girls! What a genuine piece of comedy amid the pathos and terror roundabout! And how much flesh and blood there is in many of these unpretentious tales of mystery. One may not approve that sort of literature, or take any pleasure in it, but it is not to be denied that Mrs. Rohlfs writes artistically. Art concerns the work, not the subject.

We venture the prediction that the stories written by Anna Katharine Green, by virtue not only of their attractive skillfulness but also of their perennially interesting subjects, will be read eagerly and with delight when many of the novels of brighter present fame have accumulated dust.

MOLLY ELLIOT SEAWELL.

WHEN Rudyard Kipling issued a story with strange characters before it, people wondered. They wondered still more when they discovered that in ".007", the reportorial hand of the master exhibited a knowledge of steam engines that was as technically correct as that of the man who designed them. When seamen read the sea tales of Molly Elliot Seawell, they were in the same mental condition as the engineer who read the article with the hieroglyphic heading: they marvelled.

It was not the technical knowledge of vessels and the navy alone that made Miss Seawell's stories so fascinating. With that they combined a delicate and romantic

touch that was unusual, for, with the every-day story of the sea, there is often a certain roughness that destroys the pleasure of a sensitive reader. For this reason one prominent American author has few admirers among the gentler sex.

An uncle of Molly Elliot Seawell had been in the United States Navy before the Civil War. After the commencement of hostilities he had resigned to follow the Confederate arms, and had served with distinction throughout the four years of open hostilities. From him she heard in childhood true and glowing accounts of what is known as the romantic period of the American Navy, the period when ships still carried a great spread of canvas, when cruises meant long absences of years from home, and a naval officer was called upon to meet tremendous emergencies now provided for by the cable and the telegraph. This is

what stimulated her to write of Decatur and Somers, of Paul Jones, of midshipman Paulding, of Quarter-deck and Fo'c'sle, and of Little Jarvis; and the technical knowledge she displayed, like everything she has done, was the result of hard and conscientious mental labor.

In 1890 the *Youth's Companion*, which periodically gives some stimulus to good writing, held out a prize of five hundred dollars for the best written story for boys. Miss Seawell's "Little Jarvis" won the place of honor. It was the story of our navy and of our midshipmen, which has the same patriotic wholesomeness that is possessed by Edward Everett Hale's "Man Without a Country," and, as it has nearly as large a circulation to-day as when first published in book form, there is no doubt that it will have as long and prosperous a career.

Miss Seawell's literary life is a curious example of the results of environment. Born in a quaint and long-established Virginian community — Gloucester County — she was brought up in a distinct atmosphere of books and of good literature. Her father was a lawyer of note, and in the great rambling house — "The Shelter" — was a fine old-fashioned library. It included a collection of the English classics and many translations of eighteenth century books of French philosophy, which Thomas Jefferson when minister to France, had selected for her great-grandfather, Judge Tyler, one of the first Federal judges appointed under the present system, and for three terms governor of his State. He was a great reader and his love for books was transmitted to his descendants.

As a child she went to school most irregularly, and had a short term at a fash-

ionable boarding school, where she declares she learned nothing but folly and irreverence. At home the morning hours which other children spent with arithmetic, geography, or science, she passed in making the intimate acquaintance of the library books. Here she met with Shakespeare, an ancient edition of his works with all of Johnson's, Steevens', and Malone's notes, which had been read by several generations of Seawells and showed it; and here also with Volney, with Jean Jacques Rousseau and other philosophers, whom she approached when in her teens and could not well understand. Her father and mother forbade her to read novels, — for fear of her getting notions into her head, — but, while they were strongly denying her such wild delights as Rhoda Broughton and Ouida might furnish, she was imbibing Byron and Shelley with the highest relish. By the time she was fifteen

she knew all they could teach about the emotions, and when novels were allowed her, found them decidedly tame beside her already acquired knowledge of what they were all about.

Her mother was devoted to reading from the beginning to the end of her life, and absorbed Shakespeare with a thoroughness that is seldom met with. Every two or three years she would begin deliberately at the first pages of "The Tempest" and read through to the last page of "Titus Andronicus," and in the same way would read "Hume's History of England," Scott's novels, and many other standard works. She was also a systematic peruser of newspapers, and had better knowledge of public affairs than most people in public life. It thus can easily be seen how honestly the daughter came by her love of writing. She was unconsciously, but naturally, fitted for it as is

the fisherman with many generations of seamen behind him, and a home in Gloucester.

Miss Seawell is herself an omniverous reader. Thackeray, Macaulay, and Jane Austen have been her roast-beef and potatoes of artistic creation, although she is passionately fond of biographies. So fond indeed of Boswell's "Johnson" that one literary acquaintance declares it to be the only book she had really read, because no matter what is the subject of conversation, she is certain to bring in a remark about the celebrated author.

Her home is with her sister in a charming house near Dupont Circle, or "Millionaires' Circle," in Washington, and overlooking the gardens of the Spanish legation. It is here that she does her literary work, and in very systematic fashion; for she is of the opinion that the mind can be made to work automatically as well as the body, and we can

command our powers more than we can believe. Every morning, at half-past nine, she retires to her own room and, while there, writes steadily until the luncheon hour. Books and ideas of books are now discarded until the following day. This work is discontinued from the middle of June until the first of October, when she retires from home — as far away as she can get — and there imbibes fresh ideas for forthcoming romances, while taking a complete rest from literary endeavor. In spite of this habit of yearly travel abroad, she is a thoroughly patriotic American, and has frequently remarked that nothing would induce her to leave her native country without a ticket for the return voyage.

Upon every subject upon which she writes, she reads as much as possible, following the example of Thackeray, who said that "The Virginians" was the resultant of

a thousand books; and in her long journeys of investigation to places far from home she but imitates the method of the great Macaulay, who would sometimes travel a hundred miles to write a single line of description. The scenes of "The House of Egremont," which has recently appeared, were laid in France, and, in order to obtain the proper material, a special visit was necessary to the country in which the events were laid. The quaint palace of St. Germains, with its terraces and broad gardens, was well studied by the author, who spent days in rambling about, and in absorbing a thorough knowledge of the neighborhood. Like other authors, she has found that to saturate the mind with a certain period is a powerful assistance to the imagination; and for this reason she oftentimes has read three or four entire volumes in order to write a story of five thousand words.

In 1895 the *New York Herald* offered four prizes: one of ten thousand dollars for the best novel, one of three thousand dollars for the best novelette, one of two thousand dollars for the best short story, and one of one thousand dollars for the best epic poem on a subject of American history. The first and third prizes were respectively won by Mr. Julian Hawthorne and Mr. Edgar Fawcett, while Miss Seawell received the money for the best novelette, "The Sprightly Romance of Marsac," — and over the heads of two thousand competitors. When the news that she had received a three-thousand-dollar prize reached the old family negroes in Gloucester County, the darkies magnified the amount ten hundredfold, and went about with natural awe and astonishment, while solemnly proclaiming: "Mars' John Seawell's daughter done taken three million dollars for one book."

The story she considers one of her best productions, and it is her best known work with the exception of "Little Jarvis"; but she has a long list of novels and juveniles to her credit, and one play, the manuscript of which she was the author, "Maid Marian," an amusing and witty satire on the Knickerbocker element in New York society, was originally written as a short novel, and was subsequently dramatized by Miss Seawell for Rosina Vokes, who made it a great success.

Lippincott's Magazine had the honor of receiving her first literary venture, and it was her first literary success, for it was accepted. The editor who appreciated its merit has, however, never had the satisfaction of knowing his own keenness and literary foresight, for it was signed under an assumed name. In fact, under a variety of pseudonyms, a great number of her earlier

stories, sketches, and articles of all sorts were published in magazines and newspapers. Where these immature productions are to be found she has never revealed and says she never will, and for this reason reckons herself more fortunate than most writers, for the criticism which might justly be severe upon this 'prentice work has had no chance to be expended.

Curiously enough, to literature may be ascribed the influence that changed her earlier religious faith. When a small girl, an aunt, who had the reputation of being the best-read woman in the State of Virginia, warned her that her grandmother, who had died many years before her birth, had been in youth much unsettled in her religious beliefs by reading the very books to which her descendant was becoming so firmly attached, and with which she was spending so much time in the well-fitted

library of "The Shelter." The grandmother in question was undoubtedly a woman of uncommon capacity and of restless inquiry, and probably a very pronounced agnostic at one time in her life; but sorrow and age and physical suffering, brought about a change. Miss Seawell's extremely pious aunt always declared that wider experience and a deeper knowledge of life and of books had changed her mother into a devout Christian in middle life. Unlike the experience of her grandmother, the result of this reading was to turn Miss Seawell's thoughts towards religious inquiry instead of in the opposite direction — indeed a daring thing for a young girl in a community like that of Gloucester County, where the Episcopal Church had been established for nearly three hundred years, and where there was a strong survival of the old English idea of church and state. In

her own circle of friends and relatives, the young girls were confirmed, usually, at sixteen or seventeen, and their brothers, although not frequently particularly pious, were expected to be graduated into vestrymen and strict churchmen, as their ancestors had been before them. In the midst of her reading of Mr. Jefferson's selections of French philosophers, she came suddenly across Macaulay's Essays. In his review of Ranke's "History of the Popes," and in speaking of the Catholic Church, occurs this passage:

"She may still exist in undiminished vigor when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's."

This impressed her immensely, and for the first time she realized the existence of that tremendous community which prefers

the moral case of the great Roman church. The severe blows which Macaulay frequently levels at the Established Church of England in his essay on Hallam's "Constitutional History," as well as the admiration which Thackeray expressed in nearly all his stories for the Catholic religion, made a deep impression upon the sensitive mind of such a young girl. Macaulay or Thackeray never dreamed of making a convert to the church of which neither was a member, but such indeed was the case.

A list of some of her more important novels includes: "The Berkeleys and Their Neighbors," "Throckmorton," "Children of Destiny," "Maid Marian," "The History of Lady Betty Stair," and "The Loves of Arabella." For several years she has been running away from the reputation she made in her juveniles,

because it interferes with her reputation for more serious work. It is for this reason that we have had no further stories of Little Jarvis and his fellow midshipmen.

A magazine article which Miss Seawell once wrote, and which was called "The Absence of the Creative Faculty in Woman," had considerable ephemeral fame. It was praised, attacked and criticized by writers all over the United States and in many European countries. Certain masculine critics, as Mr. Andrew Lang, who wisely declined to take sides with Miss Seawell, declared that her essay had disproved her own case.

"Papa Bouchard," which the Messrs. Scribner, Miss Seawell's publishers, claim will duplicate the success of "The Sprightly Romance of Marsac," will be published October the first, 1901. Besides this, she

has a long novel in preparation, to be finished early in 1902, and which will probably appear under the name of "Franceska Capello."

Courtesy of Dodd, Mead & Co.

AMELIA E. BARR.

AMELIA E. BARR

FOR the last sixteen years the name of Amelia E. Barr has been one of the foremost in the list of popular American writers.

Strictly speaking, Mrs. Barr is as much English as American, for she was born in Ulverston, Lancashire, England, in 1831, and since the establishment of her fame her books have been almost as widely read in the old country as in this. But, notwithstanding the ties of birth and popular affection, and notwithstanding the fact that many of her stories have dealt with British countries and British character, she is, as she probably would say herself, more American than foreign. For nearly fifty years she has been a resident of the

United States; here her children were born, here her noble husband died, here she has struggled and here succeeded. A more interesting career we have not had the pleasure of sketching.

Amelia Edith Huddleston was her name in girlhood. Her father was the Rev. William Henry Huddleston. She is fond of applying to her own case, they say, the old Scotch proverb: "It is gude luck to be born in a house fu' o' gude company, wi' a fu' moon and a high tide." When she was a girl she served her father as reader, and thus she was introduced into the literary as well as into the social world.

Our feminine readers will probably enjoy learning how strong an influence dolls had on Mrs. Barr's early life. "The dolls most in use when I was a child in Yorkshire and Lancashire," she says,

"were wooden ones; a round head, square body, legs and arms of thin slats of wood, fastened to the body with wire, thus making the limbs flexible and movable. . . . I possessed a number of all sizes, and I don't think I used them in the ordinary way. I valued them as entities for representing my story books, with big dolls for giants, little ones for children and fairies, and medium ones for men and women." She was an imaginative child, it will be noticed. "When I was six years old there was a great agitation on the slavery question, and a black leather doll was given me to represent a negro. For some time I failed to place him; then I read 'Robinson Crusoe,' and he became, of course, Man Friday, then a little later a slave. My first copy-book, I remember, was covered in pale, yellow paper, bearing a picture of a very black slave, loaded with chains, toiling in

the sugar field, and a tall white overseer, with a whip, standing near. I very soon abstracted the steel chain that held my mother's bunch of keys, loaded my negro doll with chains, selected a white doll to act as overseer, and finally I allowed the doll I called after Apollyon in 'Pilgrim's Progress' to run away with the overseer. Cinderella was one of my favorite playmates. She was a lovely blonde, as was her fairy godmother, and the only doll I possessed that might be called a baby was a large wax affair that could open and shut its eyes, and who came to me on my fourth birthday in a long narrow box lined with blue satin. . . . When I was eight years old my story books were too complex for such illustrations as the dolls once provided, and I have a dim memory of a wet Saturday and 'Stories from Ancient History,' and a miniature funeral pyre within

the nursery fender, on which all the heroes of my first romances received the fiery solution. I think of them all tenderly now. There was a pathos about those graceless wooden toys, some of which I can recall with a vividness almost startling. They still live, though they never had life, and this is a mystery which in my next idle hour I must ponder."

Idle hours come seldom to Mrs. Barr, in spite of her fulfilled three-score years and ten. She is not of the idle race, and she is distinguished no less for her enthusiastic industry than for her tenderness of heart and her fertility of imagination. Mr. Hamilton W. Mabie tells us also that "as a child she was her father's boon companion in his preaching tours through the fishing villages, and that rocks and boats and the surge of the sea were the background and accompaniment of many happy days."

In 1850, shortly after her education had been completed at Glasgow, she married Robert Barr, a Scotchman, and four years afterward she came to this country with him. They lived for a while in New York, then in the West, then in the South, and finally they settled in Austin, Texas, where Mr. Barr established himself as a merchant. At the close of the Civil War the family, which then included three sons and three daughters, moved to Galveston. There took place the tragedy which changed the course of Mrs. Barr's life. We repeat the circumstances as they were related a few years ago:

"The yellow fever broke out with extraordinary violence in Texas in 1867. The terror of the visitation is still remembered. People died on every side. The Indians, especially, fell like flies before the poisoned breath of the pestilence. The

panic spread, and all the white folk who could, abandoned the afflicted district. Mr. Barr refused to leave, for the Indians trusted him, and took from his hand medicines which they refused to take from another. The doctors and nurses all died or left. Still, Mr. Barr stood his ground, and his wife remained by his side. His gallant efforts are honorably mentioned in the official reports of that terrible visitation. Mr. Barr literally laid down his life to save others' lives. Before the pestilence abated, Mrs. Barr had lost three sons and her husband. The three daughters still remained to her, and for them she resolved to live and work." Or, as Mr. Mabie says, "In the desperate struggle against despair, which followed, Mrs. Barr turned her face northward and settled in New York in the autumn of 1869." She was then thirty-eight.

She was fortunate in bringing with her to New York a letter of introduction to Robert Bonner, the generous and influential editor of the *New York Ledger*. Her first original literary undertaking was a short story published in the *Christian Union*. While writing, she was learning to write. Circumstances had thrown her virtually upon her own resources. Her naturally buoyant disposition stood by her well; it sweetened her work, it brightened the future. Here is an account of those days that we once ran across:

"She wrote advertisements, circulars, paragraphs, verses, etc. She spent hours daily in the Astor Library, studying the secrets of her craft, getting up materials for descriptive articles and historical stories. For a long time she considered herself rich if a ten-dollar note stood between her and the future. The precious notes were de-

posited between the leaves of a Bible, with tarnished clasps, which still lies on Mrs. Barr's table. One of the incidents that she and her daughter, who is her devoted companion, often recall, is of a night when thieves broke in and stole all they could lay their hands on, breaking open the desk and taking the trinkets that had been deposited there for safety, but the Bible that lay near it, and that held all the family's fortune, was left untouched. . . . The stress of that time of struggle and privation was lightened when Mrs. Barr's first serial story appeared in the columns of the *Ledger*."

Her first great success, the success that founded her renown, came in 1885 with the publication of "Jan Vedder's Wife," although we find records of the publication of at least three other books — "Scottish Sketches" and "Cluny MacPherson" (1883) and "Paul and Christina" (1882).

But there was power as well as originality in "Jan Vedder's Wife," and to this day it remains one of the novelist's most noteworthy and most characteristic tales. It has passed through many editions, and it has been read in many countries and many languages. It was on Thanksgiving Day, 1884, by the way, that Mrs. Barr received notice of its acceptance. The scene of Jan Vedder's disappearance and apparent resurrection has especially been given wide quotation because of its rare dramatic force — its singular commingling of the earthly and the spiritual element, a commingling that has had much to do with the establishment of the author's remarkable popularity. For, in addition to an intimate knowledge of the world's simpler folk, Mrs. Barr displays the deepest reverence for religion. Which fact tends sometimes to make her books unique.

A bit of episode characteristic of the author comes to mind. It is the scene in the "Bow of Orange Ribbon," that delightful picture of New York in provincial days, when Joris Van Heemskirk decides to cast his lot with the patriots. He had ended the discussion with his wife, Lysbet.

"Then he rose, put on his hat, and walked down his garden; and, as he slowly paced between the beds of budding flowers, he thought of many things — the traditions of the past struggles for freedom, and the irritating wrongs that had embittered his own experience for ten years. There was plenty of life yet in the spirit his fathers had bequeathed to him; and, as this and that memory of wrong smote it, the soul-fire kindled, glowed, burned with passionate flame. 'Free, God gave us this fair land, and we will keep it free. There has been in it no crowns and scepters, no bloody

Philips, no priestly courts of cruelty; and, in God's name, we will have none!'

"He was standing on the river bank; and the meadows over it were green and fair to see, and the fresh wind blew into his soul a thought of his own untrammelled liberty. He looked up and down the river, and lifted his face to the clear sky, and said aloud, 'Beautiful land! To be thy children we should not deserve, if one inch of thy soil we yielded to a tyrant. Truly a vaderland to me and to mine thou hast been. Truly do I love thee.' And then, his soul being moved to its highest mark, he answered it tenderly, in the strong-syllabled mother-tongue that it knew so well: 'Indien ik u vergeet, o Vaderland! zoo vergete mijne regter-hand zich zelve.'" *

Since 1885 book after book has come from the pen of Mrs. Barr with amazing

* "If I forget thee, O Fatherland! let my right hand forget her cunning."—*Ps. cxxxvii, 5.*

regularity. It is a pen that fairly rivals Marion Crawford's in fertility, which is no light statement to make. And yet, notwithstanding this abundance — this luxuriance, it might be said — the quality is generally excellent, not brilliant, indeed, or stylish, but rather sweet and endearing. The author of "The Maid of Maiden Lane" holds the mirror up to nature — but, as a rule, at the right time, at the good and happy time. So, her men, for the most part, are honest and magnanimous, her women chaste and charming. Her latest book, "The Lion's Whelp: A Story of Cromwell's Time," is one of her strongest.

During the middle of the winter, Mrs. Barr, we are told, seeks recreation in New York City or in Virginia, but the spring finds her back in her home on Storm King Mountain, which lies two miles from Cornwall-on-the-Hudson, "Cherry Croft" the

house is named. It was built, we are told, on plans drawn by the writer herself. Her workshop is on the top floor. A writer in the *Boston Transcript* (July 8, 1901) thus describes Mrs. Barr's method of working:

"When a book is to be completed from cover to cover, this woman is up and doing long before the ordinary person is awake, often rising before daylight, A cold plunge, taken directly on rising, a light lunch of fruit and coffee, usually partaken of on the veranda, for she is another famous lover of the open air, spending as much as possible of her time within its invigorating embrace — prepare her for the day's duties, and by the time the sun is beginning to gild the mountains opposite her study window, she is busy with her pen. At twelve comes the important meal of the day. A two hours' nap, followed by another cold plunge, is then in order, after

which the morning's work is carefully typewritten by the author's own hands — no one else being allowed to handle her manuscript — and labors for the day are over. Then comes relaxation, indoors or out, calling or receiving calls, but the moment the clock strikes nine, no matter what guests or engagements the family may have, she is off to bed. This exacting routine is followed until the book is finished."

Not many men or women of seventy live more vigorously or work more enthusiastically, and still fewer at that age court the success and esteem which still attend Amelia E. Barr.

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MARY E. WILKINS.

IT is natural to suppose that any reader of current English literature would know Miss Wilkins, yet it is the much-admired author herself who tells this story of her introduction to a popular contemporary:

"It was before Mr. Crawford had publicly appeared as a reader, and just after he had read to a select coterie of Brooklyn people at the house of a well-known lady. A reception followed, and when I was introduced the hostess said, 'Mr. Crawford, I wish to introduce Miss Wilkins.'

"Mr. Crawford gave me a coldly polite bow, and I would have passed on perfectly satisfied, but not so my hostess. She felt that Mr. Crawford ought to have recognized

in me a fellow-author, and she quickly followed the first introduction with an impressive:

"'Mr. Crawford, this is Miss Mary E. Wilkins.'

"Again the delightful novelist gave me a polite bow of recognition. My friend was sorely distressed. Not even now did the lion of the evening deign to recognize this poor little body, but my friend would not be repulsed, so she returned afresh to the assault, and in a still more impressive manner, she said:

"'But, Mr. Crawford, this is Miss Mary E. Wilkins, the author of those charming stories of New England life.'

"Mr. Crawford, I felt quite sure, had never heard of poor me. I did not wonder at it. Why should he? Living so far away, and naturally enough absorbed in his own work, he probably had never seen a line I

had written, but he was equal to the occasion, and if he did simulate I could forgive him, for he was very polite. He bowed and smiled most graciously, and shaking me by the hand, he expressed great pleasure at meeting me. How I have laughed over this incident. It may not seem funny to hear me relate it, but the time, the place, and his bewildered manner as he tried to make me believe he knew all about me, was most delicious comedy."

The majority of the members of the reading public, either in this country or in England, would feel no need to simulate a knowledge of the author of "Pembroke." Mr. Crawford is an extraordinarily busy man, and he has been gracefully forgiven, but we may well be asked to believe that the hostess of that occasion was astonished.

Miss Wilkins has had an admiring audi-

ence for the last eighteen years. It was early in the eighties that she first tried her pen seriously. She wrote a short story called "The Ghost Family" for the *Boston Budget*, a weekly survival of the days of Boston's literary renown; and the story won a prize of fifty dollars, We might go back further than the eighties; but the fact that she wrote poetry at the age of twelve is conventional. What bright child does not write poetry?

We shall rely on an old friend of Miss Wilkins, Mrs. Kate Upson Clark, for a few details:

"Her first literary attempts were almost entirely for children, but at the urgent solicitation of friends she soon began to take up a deeper kind of work, and sent her first story for older readers to Miss Mary L. Booth, then editor of *Harper's Bazar*. Miss Booth thought that such cramped and un-

formed handwriting promised little, and that she was the victim of some ambitious but "unavailable" child. With her usual conscientiousness, however, she looked the little piece carefully over. It was Miss Booth's habit when attracted by a story, to read it through three times, on different days, and in different moods, before accepting it. She paid this compliment to 'Two Old Lovers,' the contribution which Miss Wilkins had submitted to her. Two days later the 'ambitious child' received a handsome check for it. From this time forth Miss Booth befriended the young writer in every way, and Miss Wilkins, who is almost morbidly appreciative of kindness, and as true to her friends as one of her own inflexible New England characters, rewarded Miss Booth's thoughtfulness by giving to her as long as she lived, the first choice of her stories." The date of the appearance

of "Two Old Lovers" in *Harper's Bazar* is March 31, 1883.

But the tail of the sketch is moving faster than the head. The author of "Two Old Lovers" was born in Randolph, Mass., in 1862. Her father, a native of Salem, was a descendant of a conspicuous Puritan, Bray Wilkins. Her mother was a Holbrook of Holbrook, an old-established family of Massachusetts country folk. Mr. Wilkins was a carpenter of ancient style, that is to say, he was both designer and builder. When Mary was a little girl, however, he gave up his profession to keep store in Brattleboro, Vt. In the town where restless Mr. Kipling alighted for a while, the daughter of the Randolph carpenter passed her girlhood. Mr. J. E. Chamberlain, who collaborated with her in the writing of "The Long Arm" (the two thousand dollar newspaper prize detective story), remarks, "so far as local influences

have affected her work, I fancy that those of Southern Vermont have preponderated."

Mr. Chamberlain also is the authority for the statement that "Her creations are mainly drawn purely out of her imagination, and squared to Nature and reality by the exercise of a keen and omnivorous faculty of observation which has grown instinctive, and is as unconscious as it is accurate — like the minutely true eye-measurements with which the Japanese carpenters astonished us at the World's Fair. And for her nature-settings and decorations she depends rather on the sharp recollections of childhood than on more recent observations. She never had a bit of the spirit of the naturalist."

All the same, there are glimpses of Randolph — of the Randolph of her childhood, in some of Miss Wilkins's stories. We read in "Jerome":

"Three fields to the northward from the Edwards's house was a great rock ledge; on the southern side of it was a famous hiding-place for a boy on a windy spring day. There was a hollow in the rock for a space as tall as Jerome, and the ledge extended itself out beyond it like a sheltering granite wing to the westward. . . . At the side of the gentle hill at the left a pile of blooming peach trees looked as if they were moving down the slope to some imperious march music of the spring."

That spot is in Randolph — within sight of the weather-beaten, two-story house in which the author was born. But Miss Wilkins is careful not to offend the townspeople by portraying the living. She has portrayed the dead, however. Barnabas, in "Pembroke," was a Randolph character. As a rule, she draws from her imagination, as Mr. Chamberlain says.

In the ten years that Miss Wilkins lived in Brattleboro she experienced a world of sorrow. Her father died, and her mother, and her sister. Burdened with her grief, Mary returned to Randolph, and there, with friends, in a typical country house standing about half a mile from her birthplace, she has since lived. Where she will live the rest of her life rests largely with Dr. Charles Manning Freeman, of Metuchen, N. J.

The author chooses to be distant to all but her dear friends, or, rather, she has a shrinking nature, like the sensitive plant. "The ancient kitchen which is Miss Wilkins's sitting-room is not also her writing-room. Though it is nicely retired, and out of the noise of the exceedingly quiet household in which she has her home, its window commands a view of nothing but the side of the adjoining house, which affords

but slight inspiration. She writes upstairs, in a room that looks off eastwardly over the street with its electric cars, and to the low coast hills and woods in the distance."

Before she became addicted to the typewriter — which was only a few years ago — she was accustomed, when in the mood for work, to produce a thousand words a day in what she once herself described as an "unformed and childish" style of handwriting. To-day her pages are as prim as a professional secretary's. We have a page before us, and at the bottom of it is the decrepid signature. It gives character to the page, however — and what would not many an autograph hunter give for it! Now and then, when at the height of her fervor, Miss Wilkins will write three or four thousand words a day; and now and then a week will pass without winning a line from her. "Environment affects her

strongly," says Mrs. Clark. "She finds it difficult, sometimes impossible, to compose anything when away from home."

"She is not," Mr. Chamberlain says, "one of those fortunate ones who can say, 'Go to! I will sleep from ten until six, and then be fresh for my work.' Sleep with her has to be wooed with subtle arts, and will follow no program. Sometimes her work goes reluctantly, and sometimes she is mastered and possessed by it, and it leaves her nervously exhausted as well as *désorientée* regarding every-day affairs. After writing her Deerfield massacre story . . . she found it hard to make herself realize that she was not living in the time and place of the story: she really believed that the story — her story — was true."

For with a strong imagination is combined in her an extremely sensitive nature. Her father was remarkable for his nervous-

ness, it is said, and so was her maternal grandfather. And Mrs. Clark assures us that, "The difficulties against which she contends are largely physical. Though her constitution is apparently sound, she is small, being only five feet tall, and is very slight." That was some years ago; to-day Miss Wilkins is plump of figure. "She possesses the sensitive organization which accompanies a large intellectual development in such a frame. Her transparent skin, her changing eyes, sometimes seeming blue, sometimes hazel, her heavy braids of golden hair, her delicately molded features, all proclaim a singularly high-strung and nervous temperament."

Doubtless this has influenced her choice of residence. Randolph is off the main line of literature, and perhaps that is why she has resisted the allurements of Boston. We saw her at a reunion of the Daughters

of Vermont in the "Hub," once upon a time, and she acted, now haughtily, and again timidly, as if she would like to run home. Yet they say that with her chafing-dish — her only hobby — in hand, she is a prodigal hostess.

Phillips Brooks is reported to have said that "A Humble Romance" was the best short story he ever read. It certainly reveals Miss Wilkins in her strongest form. It is realism brought close to idealism. In its few pages are set forth simply yet artistically, in a manner characteristic of her most successful representation of rural life in New England, quaint humor and grave tragedy, melting pathos and tickling comedy, — in the background a touch of careless virtue, and in the foreground an example of rough but admirable honor. Not every critic will go as far as Phillips Brooks went, but the discriminating critic will admit

that "A Humble Romance" is one of the author's perfect efforts. Perhaps to an admirer of the demure woman of Randolph that is saying as much as could be said. A few days ago she said that "Pembroke" was probably her best work. In England —where she is hardly less beloved than in this country—a similar opinion exists among the leading critics. And, by the way, Mr. Kipling is reported to have declared that her stories will survive his, and, at the same time, to have confessed that they touch him altogether too deeply!

But Miss Wilkins's pen does not deal exclusively with rural life. In 1893 she turned to the stage for an arena, and "Giles Corey, Yeoman," a drama of the early Puritan days, was acted in Boston under the auspices of the Theatre of Arts and Letters. Two years afterward, in collaboration with the aforementioned Mr.

Chamberlain, she wrote a detective story, "The Long Arm," which won a prize of $2,000 offered by a newspaper syndicate. Her latest novel, "The Heart's Highway," dealt effectively with a colonial theme, and her next novel—"A Portion of Labor" is the title of it, we believe—is said to have an industrial setting.

The reading public—whose interest in literature is not confined to books—had taken it for granted that Miss Wilkins would remain in single blessedness for life, but in October, 1900, was announced her engagement to Dr. Charles Manning Freeman, of Metuchen, N. J. Probably the author had never thought that she would live to be the central figure of a sensation, but she was, nevertheless; and the public soon began to ask, When will the marriage take place? The question remains unanswered, but we betray no real secret by

remarking that the affair is in no danger of ending like the bride-to-be's well-known story, "Two Old Lovers."

Courtesy of Harper & Bros

OCTAVE THANET.

OCTAVE THANET
(MISS FRENCH)

R. H. STODDARD once said that Octave Thanet was the best writer of short stories in America. In fact, he went further, we believe, and said that he enjoyed her work more than that of any other writer of the day. That was in 1888. Without discussing the value of the opinion, we may say that the fair Westerner is writing as vigorously and as picturesquely as ever; and right here we shall take the liberty of anticipating a very natural question by reprinting some remarks she made a few years ago:

"How did I come to take the *nom de plume* of Octave Thanet? Well, really, that was an accident. I was a little wary of having my identity known in the first place, and

made up my mind to write under a fictitious name. Octave was the name of a school friend of mine. It is both French and Scotch. I thought if I could find another name to go with it that was both Scotch and French I would adopt that. I was riding on a train one time when we stopped at a way station, and on a siding near where I sat was a freight car painted red. On the side was chalked the word "Thanet." What it meant or how it got there I have not the slightest idea, but I decided then and there to adopt it. Lots of people still think that Octave Thanet is a man, and I frequently get letters like this: 'My dear Mr. Thanet: I have read your works and I am sure you are a manly man.' They usually contain a request for a small loan, to be repaid in the near future."

There is an unmistakable masculine tinge in her style sometimes, and her interests

are half masculine. Her interest in the subject of the relations between capital and labor, for instance, is deeper than that of probably any other woman in the land, just as her knowledge of the subject is more extensive. Six years ago, besides she took an active interest in the Flagler case in Washington, and this year she displayed similar activity at Pittsfield, Mass., in connection with the Fosburgh case. It was she, indeed, who advanced the interesting theory that it may not have been thieves that entered the Fosburgh house. "Has it occurred to anyone," she asked, "that at the very time the Fosburgh firm were in the midst of a very serious difficulty with a labor union?" And then she added what, coming from not merely a student of industrial matters but from an outspoken friend of the American workingman, seems startling: "It is a characteristic of labor unions to regard a

strike as war, and, you know, all is fair in war. Such men are as honest in their conception of right as we are, but they would think it as much a plan of campaign to 'do up' the chief enemy as General Funston did in the capture of Aguinaldo. Men in such a cause would be just the kind to scorn to lay hands on valuables. They are not thieves. But they are as clannish as were the Irish at the time of the Phœnix Park murders, and would never betray their own."

But more of her sociology, later. Let us turn to her life.

Her name is Alice French, and she was born in Andover, Mass., on March 19, 1850. Her father, George Henry French, was at one time in the bank business with Austin Corbin, and thirty years ago he was the president of the Davenport and St. Paul Railroad. That was some ten years after his change of residence from

Andover to Davenport, Iowa. At Davenport he established an iron factory, which business, we understand, is still conducted by his sons. The Frenches, by the way, are of Irish descent. The American branch of the stock was founded by Sir William French, who emigrated to Massachusetts in the seventeenth century. One of his descendants took a prominent part in the Revolutionary War, "The Fighting Parson of Andover" they called him. Governor Marcus Morton was the father of Miss French's mother, and Chief Justice Morton was Mrs. French's brother. On this side the author is descended from the Mayflower immigrants. One of these pioneers married Governor Bradford's sister.

Miss French was educated at Abbot Academy and at Vassar. Her taste for the pen came as early as that of most other girls for the needle. "I began writing,

like many another, at an early age," she informed an interviewer in Washington six years ago, "and when I was at boarding-school I surreptitiously sent off a number of literary efforts to the magazines, all of which were returned with thanks. No, not all of them, for, through some accident, one was printed in *Godey's Magazine*, and I was given a six months' subscription in payment. I have never in after years received a check which gave me as much pleasure. My earlier efforts were devoted for the most part to very heavy essays on questions of sociology. I was a great student of history and political economy, but for three years I made no addition to my literary work. I read everything that I thought would improve my style, saw everything I could that I thought would increase my powers of observation, and literally worked hard at my preparation for a literary

career. I wrote two very heavy essays on the subject of pauperism, and if I had my own way to-day I would rather write history than fiction. Yet I suppose that fiction is the history of every-day life, and may be made just as true a picture of our day and generation as a more laborious and ambitious effort.

"I sent one story at a time to the *Century*, and the editor suggested that I would be wise to confine myself to short stories. I cannot say that I wanted to altogether, but I realized that I might make from one hundred dollars to three hundred dollars a year writing on social and economic questions, and as I enjoy spending rather more money than I receive as dividends from an iron mill, I decided to take his advice. Since then I have met with some degree of favor and success. All my stories that I have written since that three years of rest have been printed somewhere,

though not always where they were first sent. I have had stories that I sent to the leading magazines end up in a western weekly paper, and received three dollars and a half, when I had counted on fifty dollars."

Doubtless the foregoing account may be regarded as reliable. But we have met other conflicting statements. A member of Miss French's family has been referred to as the author of the statement that her first story was sent to *Harper's Monthly*, "and, after a long and weary waiting, it was published in their *Bazar*, as being not up to the mark of the monthly magazine." According to Mrs. Lillie B. Chace Wyman, "her sketch called 'A Communist's Wife' was published by *Lippincott's Magazine* in 1878, under the title of 'Communists and Capitalists.'... The young author received forty dollars for it." This may have been

one of the two "very heavy essays" to which the author has referred.

However, it was "The Bishop's Vagabond," published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in January, 1884, which forms the cornerstone of Octave Thanet's fame. It is a memorable story in many respects. It signalized the author's first display of her gift of narrative power, and also her first attempt to portray southern character. Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton used to maintain that the story "shows Octave Thanet at her best." It is certainly a remarkable welding of humor and pathos, and the wreck of the train is as dramatic a scene as Sardou himself ever drew.

But, while the dramatic element is in mind, let us take a scene from "Expiation," Miss French's most ambitious work — the scene in which Bud Fowler covertly watches Fairfax Rutherford on guard over the villanous Dick Barnabas in the swamp. The

guerilla is pleading to be freed, and the hero is sorely perplexed.

"'It 's no use, Barnabas; I bear you no malice, but I can 't let you go.'

"'Ye *das n't* let me go! You 're a coward!' screamed the wretch. His voice was terrible.

"Fairfax's face was whiter than his. Instead of replying to the taunt, he pulled a whiskey flask out of his pocket and threw it at the outlaw, calling him to catch it, drink it — it would keep the cold out.

"But he would not look at the man gulping down the liquor in furious haste.

"He wheeled his horse to ride back a little distance, thinking to get a better view through the trees, and to call for help. At the same instant Betty Ward shied, and something like a line of white fire sheared the air past him, to bury itself in a cypress-trunk, where it hung quivering — Dick Barnabas's bowie-knife.

"Fairfax turned. But not for the useless blow; he turned because the wood was reverberating with the crash of a gunshot and a scream of agony.

"Where Dick had stood there remained only an awful bas-relief of a head and shoulders flung face downward, with outstretched arms on the smooth black mud. A hand moved once. The wind lifted the long black hair. That was all. In a few moments the smooth black surface was unbroken.

"Bud Fowler stepped calmly down from his perch in a swamp hackberry-tree, at right angles to Fairfax. He was neither pale nor flushed, but sallow and freckled and solemn-looking, as usual. And, as usual, one of his hands was hitching up his trousers.

"'All that ar good whiskey plumb wasted!' was his first speech. 'Wa'al, he

won't drink no more. I promised maw I 'd kill 'im, an' I done it.' "

For a small picture it is one of the most terribly dramatic in American fiction. In excitement it falls short of the rescue of the bishop in "The Bishop's Vagabond," the scene to which we referred previously, but for grimness combined with brevity it is unsurpassably impressive.

Coming back to Mrs. Moulton's opinion and the question of preference, there has for years been a strong popular and critical liking for "The Ogre of Ha Ha Bay," which, it seems to us, shows the author "at her best." This story was printed in *The Atlantic Monthly* in October, 1885. It won for Miss French the hearty admiration of Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

"Truth," she said to an interviewer once, "is what I seek above all things else. I want to tell my story as it really is, and

describe things and people as they really are"— which reminds us of a famous line that Kipling wrote a few years ago. "I do not try to write 'purpose stories,' nor have my stories often a pointed moral. I say what I have to say, and let my readers draw their own conclusions." Which reminds us — if another intrusion will be excused — of what a critic said when "Expiation" and "We All" were new: "There is a lurid, realistic tone . . . in some of her later fiction that does not impress us as favorably as that which had preceded it." But Octave Thanet is stubborn in her purposes — and erratic, as witness her preposterous ideas on the Fosburgh mystery. She does not court popularity. But we were quoting her remarks:

"Yes, I have written much of western towns. I think it is in the villages and in the country districts that the best of our

American citizenship can be found to-day, not in the big cities. I am a believer in all things American, and I believe, too, that many of the social questions that vex us to-day may be solved without hard feeling or trouble if both sides try to understand each other. Sympathy and understanding are needed."

Miss French's working hours are as long as the daylight is, but she has her wholesome amusements, also. She loves the southwestern country. There, we are told, she roams enthusiastically, admiring the landscape, which she calls "ideally beautiful"; and her wanderings always strengthen her conviction that "there are no forests like the cypress woods in Spring." She has been wont to spend a part of every summer in the East, on the sands of Cape Cod. It was in the East a decade or so ago, that she acquired no mean skill in photography.

One who has viewed the author at close range says: "Many seeing Miss French would readily believe her a very contented German. She is of medium height, rather stout, and has light brown, curling hair, now just beginning to mark the flight of time. Her expression is very animated and her conversation vivacious. She excels in cooking and is very domestic."

She excels, too, we must say, in the writing of short stories. Writers of that sort of literature have become almost as numerous in this country as blades of grass since Mr. Stoddard uttered his very flattering opinion of her, but the name of Octave Thanet is still exceedingly brilliant, and in adeptness of construction and power of expression and vividness of portrayal, the author of "The Bishop's Vagabond" still remains among our foremost writers of fiction.

MARSHALL SAUNDERS.

THERE was once a young French man who was studying the painter's art. Similar to the usual student of small stature and equally small means, he had an enormous ambition. He worked with a will, and yet in every sketch of casts, of moving figures, or of still life, his restless fingers always ran instinctively to the military. The signing of his name to a poster or oil would always be accompanied by some small token of a soldier's life, a bugle, a bayonet, a cuirassier's helmet, or what not. One day his instructor accosted him thus: "Well, ——, you have been a good student and a hard worker, but you should be a general. Go and join the army!" He followed this advice, but the

overwhelming sense of the artistic in his nature drew him back again to the pencil and the paint brush. When he died the greatest delineator of European military life had been lost to the world.

This incident bears directly upon the life and art of Marshall Saunders, for hers is a mind that has its own particular sphere of creative ability, and in this sphere it has remained and has won success. The same invisible something that drew the Frenchman's fingers to the soldier, has drawn the imagination of Miss Saunders to the delineation of the lives and characteristics of simple natures. Differing also from a prominent American authoress who gave promise of masterful work in this same sphere by one great story on the American child, but disappointed those who expected wonderful things by spending the time subsequent to its production in the creation

of romances of a degenerate English aristocracy; Miss Saunders has followed the success of her first great juvenile with other successes of equal merit. "The Adventures of 'Tilda Jane" in 1901 is a chronicle which bids fair to be as widely read as the story of "Beautiful Joe," which appeared in 1894, and has sold four hundred thousand strong. Worth alone could stimulate such a reading.

This worth is of a character which is similar to the motto of most successful business men, "in the long run, honesty is the best policy." The value of her writing is the value that the stories of Louisa May Alcott possess, that of purity, honesty, and simplicity, characteristics which are alone able to sustain the respect and admiration of the Anglo-Saxon, no matter in what direction they are employed.

She was born at her grandfather's house

in Milton, Queen's County, Nova Scotia, on April 13, 1861, and is the daughter of a clergyman. In early life he conducted her education, and as he was a great Latin scholar, gave her a thorough drilling in that language, a foundation which is undeniably accountable for the purity and vigor of her style. At the age of six, an occurrence took place that was a memorable one for a child of her years. The family left their beautiful country home and moved to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and of her first impressions of the city she has said: "I shall never forget the feeling of depression, as I gathered my brothers and sisters around me (I am the eldest of the family) and, sitting on our front doorstep, surveyed the rows of houses opposite. What a change in our lives! We country plants had been transferred to the arid soil of a city. We turned our backs on the

confusion of unpacking, and wandered up and down the street. I remember being particularly struck with a row of seven houses all alike. Such a thing had been unknown in my previous experience."

With the adaptability of childhood, however, she soon became accustomed to city life, although her love for the country has ever been the stronger. She was educated in public and private schools until fifteen, when at a Presbyterian boarding school in Scotland she learned how to stifle the agonies of homesickness. After a year in Edinburgh she was sent to France, where she was thrown almost entirely with French people, and a year or two later returned to Nova Scotia — "brimful of fun, having passed through many interesting experiences, and with nothing now to do." For some time she taught school, and then began her literary work — and quite by

chance. In her own words, she tells us that upon one occasion, her father asked her to reply to a letter that he had recently received from Dr. Rand, a professor in a Canadian college. "The subject matter of the correspondence was of a public character and had its humorous side. In replying to the letter of the professor, who had been from early childhood an intimate friend of the family, I indulged in some banter which impressed him. In his reply to my father he said: 'Judging from Marshall's letter, her calling is assured. Why does she not begin at once to write?' The idea struck me as an exceedingly amusing one, and not until the intimate friend had referred to it again, did I conconsider it. Then I asked him, 'What shall I write about?'

"'Write of the beauty of our winter scenery,' he responded, 'of the stillness

of the woods, the rabbits' track in the snow.'

"I was grateful to him for the suggestion but did not seem able to act upon it. However, I turned the matter over in my mind, and shortly afterwards when both my parents were away in the country, took pen and paper and sat down to write. I was then twenty-three years old, and the sensational appealed to me more strongly than anything else. I could make nothing of the rabbit, so discarded him for a burglar. In three weeks I had concocted a story of a man, his wife, and a robbery. Now what to do with it? I went to town with my sister Rita, my first confidante in literary affairs, and bought an armful of magazines and papers." Her sister was as ignorant as she was, but between them they decided on the Leslie publications. They, if any, would be able to appreciate her venture, so

the story was mailed and the result was anxiously awaited.

One day her parents came home and she went to them with a letter. Mrs. Frank Leslie had sent her forty dollars for her story, and "she would be pleased to get another one."

"My sister and I made a rapid and jubilant calculation," she tells us; "forty dollars for every three weeks in the year — what a comfortable amount of pin money! Alas! the next story was promptly rejected. However, my parents came to my rescue. 'You can write and you like to write,' my father said; 'take all the time you wish, and remember that uninterrupted success does not come to anyone setting out on any career.' Therefore I wrote on. I needed practice, and occasionally I sent a story to some paper or magazine. Some were accepted, more

rejected, and there is one dismal entry in my note-book: 'Two stories stolen by a literary bureau.'"

With excellent judgment she now spent several years in foreign travel, and returning to Nova Scotia began writing more vigorously than ever. She became correspondent for a Canadian newspaper, but it was not until 1887 that she had the gratification of seeing one of her own productions in book form. It was called "My Spanish Sailor," and was brought out by a London firm. Its reception by the English press was a warm one, but did not insure a large sale either in England or Canada. Nothing daunted, she still applied herself diligently to literary work and in 1892, after returning from a year's visit in northern Canada, saw the advertisement of the American Humane Educational Society for a story about animals, and be-

came immediately possessed with the desire of competing for it, for she is passionately fond of dumb creatures and had never attempted a story about them. The preparation of "Beautiful Joe" took six months, and the story was largely of her own life. It gained the coveted prize, which was two hundred dollars, but the alternative was offered the author of retaining the manuscript and forfeiting the prize. This she preferred, and for six months "Beautiful Joe" went begging among the publishers. Finally it fell into the hands of a firm in Philadelphia, one of whose members recognized its merit and accepted the responsibility of bringing it out. In a few years it had sold over two hundred thousand copies and had been translated into Swedish, German, and Japanese. Since the publication of "Our Dogs" by John Brown, and the touching

story of "Rab and his Friends" by the same author, no better or more sympathetic narrative of animal life has yet appeared.

"Daisy," a short temperance story, written for an English charity, was published during the following year, and "Charles and His Lamb" in 1896. This was likewise a children's story, and although it did not share the great popularity of "Beautiful Joe," a letter written by an Italian princess to the author, will show how far from home it penetrated and was appreciated. Writing from Naples, she touchingly remarked: "I never read anything sweeter in my life than the story of that darling child and his lamb. May the dear Father who made them both, bless them both, and her, too, who has written so lovingly of them." "Such epistles as these are more to be desired than the most

flattering criticism of the keen reviewer, who has become so satiated with manuscript, and excellent manuscript at that, that only the most artistic work could unloosen a word of ardent praise," an eminent critic has said: "it is similar to the word of admiration the minister receives from the poor parishioner, who, from the very last seat in the fashionably crowded church, has listened with appreciation to his words of hope and comfort. His simple commendation gives more genuine and lasting satisfaction than the well-phrased and laudatory paragraph in the ecclesiastical review."

"For the Other Boy's Sake" came out in 1897, and "The House of Armour," "The King of the Park," and "Rose à Charlitte" in 1898. Of them, the latter, a tale of the country of Longfellow's "Evangeline," was destined to meet with a most favorable recep-

tion. Many of the Acadians, it is known, after enduring unutterable hardships in exile, found their way back to the land of their birth and there resettled the abandoned country and made new homes. In the western part of Nova Scotia there is one continuous village, thirty-five miles in length, which winds about the sinuous curve of St. Mary's Bay. It is here that the Acadians live separately from the English to the present day, and still preserve their language, traditions, customs, and unique manner of life. Here Miss Saunders spent the summer of 1897, and "Rose à Charlitte" was the resultant.

In 1899 appeared "Deficient Saints," a story of Maine, in which the characters were of the same wholesome purity that has typified the productions of her imagination. They were descendants of an old French family, whose home for many years

had been in Maine, and the plot dealt in the reunion of the many branches of the original house, and the obstructive workings of the French and Puritan emotions in each individual. It was soon followed by "Her Sailor" (which was her first novel rewritten), "For His Country," a patriotic story for children, and "'Tilda Jane," which first appeared in the *Youth's Companion*, and was from the beginning a tremendous success. "'Tilda Jane" is a small orphan who seeks industriously for a home, and the experiences through which she passes in the endeavor to reach the coveted object possess a pathetic humor that is of peculiar charm. Miss Saunders is exceedingly fond of local stories, and to collect material for this narrative, travelled through Maine with note-book in hand. The orphan arouses interest because she appeals to that longing in every human

breast — the longing for a happy home. "'Tilda wanted a fire and a rocking-chair and someone to smooth her head and call her 'my own dear child.'"

Mr. Angell, president of the American Humane Society, has said it is not enough to educate the intellect, but that one must also educate the heart. That the schools and colleges are multiplying, but that crime is on the increase. That if one but teaches the little child his duty to the lower creation, statistics prove that he will be more mindful of duty to the higher. This idea Miss Saunders has assimilated, and consequently her pet hobby is that of humane education.

Her apprenticeship has indeed been a long and varied one. Articles from her pen, and of varying lengths, have appeared in nearly every important magazine in this country and in Canada, and, as she says of

"'Tilda Jane," "I am learning all the time, and have profited by former mistakes in its composition." It is only rarely that a real character is put into a story. The heroine of "Beautiful Joe," was her own beloved sister, who died at the age of seventeen, and her character was faithfully drawn; but usually she prefers to use suggestions — a little from here, there, and from everywhere.

The fact that as a child she enjoyed boy's books because they possessed more life and energy than stories for girls, in some measure accounts for the vitality that she has shown in most of her productions. Throughout her life she has been an omnivorous reader, making literary pilgrimages in the city, to the shrines of ancient and modern historians, and, when all else failed, taking to a cyclopedia of anecdotes of literature and fine arts. In the country, some of her dear-

est spots were the old garrets. "From their hiding places under the eaves, I would draw out old books and back numbers of magazines. Reading has been one of the greatest pleasures of my life."

Representing, as she does, the best and purest moral force in literature, and in a century when there seems to be danger of a literary degradation through popular clamor for books of a realistic and questionable type, it is just to hope for what one of Dickens' characters so much desired: "a plenty, an' as hot off'n the stove as it will come." Though we cannot put in a plea of a similar nature, — for literary preparation, as all who try well know, must be undertaken first with pains, and again with time, in order to excel; we can at least make the additional remark, that the world will be all the better for more "Beautiful Joes" and "'Tilda Janes."

KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN.

KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN (MRS. RIGGS)

AS a postscript to a very amusing letter which Kate Douglas Wiggin had written to an inquisitive biographer, and which she had addressed to "My dear Boswell," and playfully ended with "Believe me, my dear Bozzy, Sincerely your Johnson (K. D. W.)," her sister added the following:

My sister was certainly a capable little person at a tender age, concocting delectable milk-toast, browning toothsome buckwheats, and generally making a very good Parent's Assistant. I have also visions of her toiling at patchwork and oversewing sheets like a nice old-fashioned little girl in a story-book; and in connection with the linsey-woolsey frock and the sled before mentioned, I see a blue and white hood with a mass of shining

fair hair escaping below it, and a pair of very pink cheeks.

Further to illustrate her personality, I think no one much in her company at any age could have failed to note an exceedingly lively tongue and a general air of executive ability.

If I am to be truthful, I must say that I recall few indications of budding authorship, save an engrossing diary (kept for six months only), and a devotion to reading.

Her "literary passions" were the "Arabian Nights," "Scottish Chiefs," "Don Quixote," "Thaddeus of Warsaw," Irving's "Mahomet," Thackeray's "Snobs," "Undine," and the "Martyrs of Spain." These volumes, joined to an old green Shakespeare and a Plum Pudding edition of Dickens, were the chief of her diet.

But stay! while I am talking of literary tendencies, I do remember a certain prize essay entitled "Pictures in the Clouds,"— not so called because it *took* the prize, alas! but because it competed for it.

There is also a myth in the household (doubtless invented by my mother) that my

sister learned her letters from the signs in the street, and taught herself to read when scarcely out of long clothes. This may be cited as a bit of "corroborative detail," though personally I never believed in it.

Johnson's Sister,

N. A. S.

The "lively tongue and general air of executive ability" which were hers as a child are what have won her success in later years. Wisdom and wit, practical knowledge and capacity, have here been blended with curious balance. Perhaps the varied experiences of her career have been of exceptional influence, and have stimulated a keener insight into things human, and a more delicate and humorous appreciation of certain phases of life than others possess. Her ancestors, indeed, bestowed good gifts, for they were men of prominence in the church, in politics, and at the New England bar, combining a certain shrewd humor

with stern Puritan wholesomeness, many traditions of which have been handed down in the family. Her environment has also been diversified: born in Philadelphia, she was educated in New England, next transplanted to California, and then brought back to the Atlantic coast, where she has only spasmodically remained.

The excellent and wholesome *St. Nicholas* had the honor of receiving Kate Douglas Smith's first article, written at the age of eighteen, and for it donated the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars. At the time it was composed, she was studying methods of the kindergarten under the celebrated Emma Marshall in California, and the story, "Half a Dozen Housekeepers," was relative to this interesting work. To California she had moved after the death of her stepfather, and here she was teaching in the Santa Barbara College

when called upon to organize the first free kindergarten west of the Rocky Mountains. The "Silver Street Kindergarten" in San Francisco was the outcome of her individual efforts and those of her sister. It was not only a great object lesson, but was the progenitor of fifty-six other similar schools, and the inspiration for similar efforts in Japan, Australia, New Zealand, British Columbia, and the Hawaiian Islands. The first year of its existence fifteen hundred people visited this novelty in primary education, and it did effective and telling work, for with the poorest of the city Mrs. Wiggin's energy was principally devoted, and the school was, — and is at the present time, — located in the slums of San Francisco.

Upon the wall of one of the rooms which is a favorite with the children, is a lifelike portrait of the founder, underneath which are the following words:

KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN.

In this room was born the first free kindergarten west of the Rocky Mountains. Let me have the happiness of looking down upon many successive groups of children sitting in these same seats.

Shortly after the school had been placed upon a stable basis, its originator was united in marriage to Mr. Samuel Bradley Wiggin, a talented young lawyer. She now gave up teaching, but continued to give weekly lectures to the training class, and to visit the many kindergartens which had resulted from the spirit and individuality which she had infused into this movement. She thus unconsciously obtained a thorough knowledge of human nature, and as a result of her observations "The Story of Patsy" was written and printed in San Francisco. It was to raise money for her work, and three thousand copies were

quickly disposed of without the publisher's aid. This was soon followed by "The Birds' Christmas Carol," a book equally popular and written with the same end in view.

A few years later, in 1888, Mr. and Mrs. Wiggin moved to New York, where the friends of the brilliant authoress, who at that time was totally unknown to the East, urged upon her to offer the two books to an Eastern publisher. Acting upon their advice, she submitted "Pasty" and the "Carol" to Houghton, Mifflin & Company, although it is not customary to reprint work that has already appeared elsewhere, and in book form. Their success under the stamp of this great New England house, was exceptional.

The children of "The Birds' Christmas Carol" have endeared Kate Douglas Wiggin to thousands in America and this is her most

popular work in Great Britain. It has been translated into Japanese, French, German, and Swedish, and has also been put into raised type for the blind.

Her next publication, the story of "Timothy's Quest," had an interesting beginning, for it originated from the unsuspecting remark of a little child, who, in speaking of a certain house, quite wittily remarked, "I think they need some babies there." This Mrs. Wiggin remembered, and jotted down in her notebook: "needing babies." Soon afterwards the story of little Timothy appeared. It is a favorite in Denmark, has found its way into a Swedish edition, and has also been published in the Tauchnitz series. "Polly Oliver's Problem" was next written, and has been highly praised by Rudyard Kipling, who considers Polly Oliver the most delightful heroine in English fiction. It has likewise been translated into several

foreign languages, and is one of a collection of her books, with unique illustrations, corresponding to the life of the country in which they have been published.

Mr. Wiggin died soon after leaving San Francisco, and his wife, who was separated from her interesting employment in California, threw herself with great energy into the kindergarten movement in the city, which, at the time, was absorbing much popular attention, and was the subject of considerable agitation in the newspapers. In order to further the interests of her work, she was eventually enticed to read from her own books, and at this was most successful. Her interpretation of her own characters is full of taste and feeling, and her reading has always been for purposes of a purely philanthropic nature, and especially for her own pet cause, the introduction of kindergartens; an object for which

she still works with untiring zeal and continued interest. Apropos of her affection for literature, she has characteristically remarked that she would rather write a story for the mere love of the creative work than for the most exorbitant pay.

When a very young child she was brought up at the quiet and secluded little hamlet of Hollis, Maine, and since her return to the East has completed most of her literary work at a rambling old-fashioned house called "Quillcote," — for those summers which have not been passed in foreign travel, have been spent in the seclusion of this quaint family mansion. The house itself is similar to many New England homesteads, for it is of colonial architecture, with broad eaves, and surrounded by graceful elms. Its situation is upon a slight eminence, from which one can well view the fertile valleys that stretch in front, and, in the

distance, the undulating foot-hills of Mt. Washington.

A glance into her sanctum upon the second floor shows that here is a literary workman who dearly loves order, for every detail shows neatness and exactitude. Interesting gifts and souvenirs are scattered about, together with many tributes from admirers in various and far-distant lands. The windows overlook a broad plot of grass, studded with graceful trees, where, from May till after nesting time, robins, orioles, blue-birds, and many other songsters, hold high and joyous carnival. But a short distance away, at the foot of a precipitous bank, the Saco river flows quietly towards the sea — an ideal spot, in fact, for delicate creations of the imagination. The "Pleasant River" in "Timothy's Quest" is this winding stream, and many of the scenes and descriptions in "The

Village Watch Tower" were taken from this quiet neighborhood.

Since her marriage to Mr. George Christopher Riggs, in 1895, Mrs. Riggs has spent much time abroad, and has become closely associated with the British Isles, for, although no Anglomaniac, she is very fond of the English people, and has many warm friends across the Atlantic. "Penelope's English Experiences" was an excellent portrayal of her own impressions among them; and from life in Edinburgh, springtimes in the Highlands, and summer in the fertile Lowlands, grew "Penelope's Progress," a book widely read and as much appreciated and laughed over as heartily in the land o' the heather as it has been in America. During this time, Ireland had only now and again received a flying visit, and at rare intervals, but as the public began to clamor for an Irish "Penelope,"

to complete the series, in the summer of 1900 Mrs. Wiggin made a long journey to the Isle of Erin, and as a result we had the extraordinary and humorous "Penelope's Irish Experiences." It is said that when an English author heard of the proposed visit he expressed his hearty approval upon patriotic grounds, with the witty remark that, if the projected book remained unwritten, Ireland would for once have a real grievance, and questions would be asked in the House which Mr. Balfour would find it difficult to answer.

GERTRUDE ATHERTON.

GERTRUDE ATHERTON

TEN years ago the name of Gertrude Atherton had a remote place in American literature. What place does the name occupy to-day?

It is really hard to say. One critic has boldly likened her to George Eliot; another has spoken of her as a "literary experimenter on generally unfortunate subjects." Of one thing we are certain: the reading public takes a lively interest in her books.

Probably Mrs. Atherton would wish to be judged by "Senator North." That story, to be sure, appeared during a period of flamboyant advertising, when many books were expanded balloon-like — some of them to explode ignominiously. Let us see what

sort of judgment was passed on the author of "Senator North."

The critic who saw in her another George Eliot said: "Mrs. Atherton . . . is a real writer in every sense of the word. She is as born to tell stories as the men who made the 'Arabian Nights,' and she has that rare power of evoking a living human being with a stroke or two, — with almost the mere mention of a name. However she may elaborate a character later on, we have never to wait for that elaboration to realize her heroes and heroines. Like a clever hostess she has a gift for making them really 'known' to the reader by little more than saying Miss So-and-So, or she will start off with a bit of dialogue that subtly sets two people before you in less than a page. Then she has command of a spontaneous, direct, supple and pointed prose style, which is entirely free from

affectation . . . She is one of the wittiest of modern writers, but the wit is the crackling of the superabundant electricity of her brain and not that paradoxical jigging of the mind which is one of the warnings of cerebral paralysis. She is 'smart,' of course, at times, but all wit is sometimes that. More than any living writer I can think of, her wit reminds me, in its essential quality, of Mr. George Meredith — though superficially, it lacks the mannerisms which occasionally obscure the calm spaces of that great wisdom. Real wit flashes out of the full conquering mind, as real laughter ripples from a full happy heart, like wine out of a bottle."

Another opinion — possibly a minority opinion — handed down, characterized "Senator North" as "a somewhat hysterical study of Washington life." The judge passed over the literary aspects of the case,

however, and differed with Mrs. Atherton on sociological points.

It has been thus for the last six years. We doubt that any other American romancist divides the critics into two camps so regularly and so resistlessly. Of the profitable faculty of exciting critical disputes Mrs. Atherton is one of the largest possessors.

During the reign of "Senator North" we met the suggestion that an Atherton "birthday book" might be compiled.

Here are a few quotations, taken at random from "Senator North," that illustrate the author's wit and wisdom:

"Betty (the heroine — of course you remember Betty Madison) had been educated by private tutors, then taken abroad for two years to France, Germany and Italy, in order, as she herself observed, to make the foreign attaché feel more at ease when he proposed."

"We are none of us taken long for what we are not."

"Betty thought the women very nice, but less interesting than the men, possibly because they were women."

"The good in human nature predominates."

"Washington had a brain of ice, and his ideal of American propriety was frozen within it."

"Women make a god of what they cannot understand in a man. If he has a bad temper they think of him as a dominant personality."

"Her husband, brilliant and charming, had possessed a set of affections too restless and ardent to confine themselves within the domestic limits. His wife had buried him with sorrow, but with a deep sigh of relief that for the future she could mourn him without protest."

"You always have prided yourself," remarks Betty, "that I am intellectual, and so I am in the flabby 'well-read' fashion. I feel as if my brain had been a mausoleum for skeletons and mummies."

Frankly, we discover nothing in Mrs. Atherton to warrant crowning her with the laurels worn by George Eliot. As we have already said, "Senator North" and its predecessors all stirred up more or less controversy, sometimes social, as in the case of "American Men and English Women," but more often literary. For strictly within the limits of literary criticism stands the matter of choice of a subject; and even her staunchest admirers would not claim that the Californian writer has been very happy in the choice of subjects. By subjects we mean especially, characters, of which, perhaps, the most unfortunate is the young woman in "A

Daughter of the Vine." Admitted too by some of her most enthusiastic adherents is the fact that Mrs. Atherton's genius is a variable quality. "She is unequal, of course," remarks one, "but seeing that every real writer that ever lived has been 'unequal,' and the greatest most unequal, it is a weak concession to modern phases of criticism even to mention that universal limitation."

Yes, Mrs. Atherton is "unequal," indeed. Inequality — if that be the word — is prominent in her intellectual make-up. Her writings fit the description of her movements — uncertain, impetuous. One day she is penning a chapter to fascinate her friends and stagger the poor literary gentry; the next day she is airing her opinions in the columns of a yellow journal.

Mrs. Atherton was born in the Rincon Hill quarter of San Francisco in 1857.

Her mother was the daughter of Stephen Franklin, a descendant of the immortal Benjamin's youngest brother, John. Stephen Franklin left Oxford, N. Y., when he was a young man and went to New Orleans, where, after having amassed a large fortune, he was almost ruined by a false partner. He then moved from New Orleans to Central America and later to California, where before long he became influential. When his daughter, who had been educated at Spingler Institute, in New York City, arrived in California, she was hailed as the most beautiful girl in the country. She married Thomas L. Horn, a native of Stonington, Conn., who was a prominent citizen of San Francisco and a member of the historical Vigilant Committee.

Gertrude attended various small private schools for a time; afterwards she was a

pupil at St. Mary's Hall, Benicia, California, and at Sayre Institute, Lexington, Ky. But delicate health kept her away from school a great deal, and thus she came to enjoy the tutelage of her grandparents. At the age of four she was taught reading and spelling by her grandmother. Her grandfather, Mr. Franklin, who meantime had established the first newspaper of San Francisco, *The Golden Era*, possessed the largest private library in the State, and therein Gertrude was free to browse before she entered her 'teens. It is not to be wondered at that her mind had an early development; that it acquired some masculinity and considerable originality; that it formed a taste for strange-flavored literature. And there was an abundance of that kind of literature in the library — books that had come down from generation to generation. We can

trace back to this juvenile independence, this mingling of youth with old age, many of the author's idiosyncrasies. Although the Greek and Latin classics were in the library, we have been informed that Gertrude derived her knowledge of ancient literature mostly from translations. For this Emerson would have applauded her — and Gladstone scolded her.

Gertrude still had two years of school before her when she married George Henry Bowen Atherton, of Menlo Park, California, a Chilean by birth, as was his mother, but an American on his father's side. At the time of the marriage the Athertons, socially, were the leading family of California.

Of the beginning of her literary career Mrs. Atherton has informed us: "I began to write, or rather to compose, which took then the form of spinning astonishing

yarns about my daily doings, when I was at some tender age, and when I went to school I remember the big girls gave me blank books in which to write stories for them. The first story I published, shortly after I married, was called 'The Randolphs of Redwoods,' and was the same fundamentally as 'A Daughter of the Vine.' It was published in the *San Francisco Argonaut*. The name of my first published book — although I should like all my ancient and amateur efforts to rest decently in their graves — was 'What Dreams May Come,' which came out in 1888. Then came 'Hermia Suydam,' 'Los Cerritos,' 'The Doomswoman,' 'A Whirl Asunder,' 'Patience Sparhawk and Her Times,' 'His Fortunate Grace,' 'American Wives and English Husbands,' 'The Californians,' 'A Daughter of the Vine,' and 'Senator North.'"

At the age of fifteen, we are told, she wrote a play, which was acted at St. Mary's Hall, Benicia, Cal.

It was Mrs. Atherton's early purpose to exploit the romance of the juvenile age of the far West. She went about her task wisely and energetically. There was a temptation to depend upon the more or less mythical tradition which from time to time found its way into the San Francisco newspapers, but Mrs. Atherton put this aside and went straight to headquarters. They say that she made her residence in the old adobe settlements, and with sharpened eyes and ears, mixed with the surviving Spanish pioneers. For they, too, were pioneers, those hardy, brownfaced men and women from over the sea — pioneers no less than the Americans who pushed on farther north, even to the shores of the Columbia. And though their his-

tory has less of the strenuous in it than that of the resolute state-makers who followed Lewis and Clark, still it has as much of the picturesque and of the romantic. Out of these experiences Mrs. Atherton wrote "Before the Gringo Came," which was published in 1893. Her first books were as rounds of the ladder. "Patience Sparhawk" finally brought her into prominence. We mean literary prominence. Her sharp comments on Anglo-American society had elevated her to the distinction of a subject of public controversy.

Naturally enough, Mrs. Atherton's popularity was first established in the West; and it is the West that up to to-day has been truest to her. It is in the West that one still meets such a remark as this, for instance: "But, whatever her shortcomings, Mrs. Atherton is the buoyant possessor of three important qualities of the novelist —

the novelist, that is, pure and simple: She compels one to read on, she can tell a story, and she creates characters — and all these things she does, not because she tries, but because she cannot help it."

We still meet readers — and many readers, by the way, are persons of superlatively fine judgment — who prefer "Patience Sparhawk and Her Times," which was published in 1897, to all the other Atherton books. Certainly, previous to "Senator North," it was the novelist's most ambitious and most praiseworthy effort. It came within an ace of being a literary phenomenon. For it must be remembered that in her youth, Mrs. Atherton missed many of the advantages enjoyed by the average girl. San Francisco, to be sure, was not without a strong literary atmosphere; nor was it without the appearances of polite society (*vide* Bret Harte's "Under

the Redwoods"). But Gertrude had been pent-up, immured, and she had been fed mostly at the old-fashioned classical table. We have been informed that, until her marriage, she had only the barest acquaintance with modern fiction, that is, we presume, with American novels. This is much the same as if Claude Monet had in his youth been acquainted only with Perugino and Fra Angelico. Fancy an impressionist reared on such a diet!

But it was in Mrs. Atherton to write powerfully and originally — almost as powerfully and originally, sometimes, as any other woman among her contemporaries.

After her husband's death, Mrs. Atherton crossed the continent to New York; then she spent some years abroad. She went abroad, she declares, rather bitterly, "to make my reputation, for the press and the literary powers here fought me per-

sistently — I suppose because I was not a child of the regiment. Now a great many American publishers ask for my books."

The press and the literary powers of the country may have fought her persistently, but they could not have fought her maliciously. She also declares that she thinks "with the advanced minority — which is precious small in this country." Such a declaration, coming from a woman, compels silence. Mrs. Atherton, by the way, is to return to Europe very soon.

During the greater part of the year she has been engaged on a dramatized biography — as she calls it — of Alexander Hamilton. She says of it: "A novel is a pivotal thing. This is written with the sequence of biography, nothing omitted, not even funding, taxes and finance! but the personalities carry off the tiresome subjects — to the average reader — and there

is no great amount of detail." She will also edit a volume of Hamilton's letters! The dramatized biography is due to appear early this season under the title of "The Conqueror."

Photo by Chancellor, Dublin.

JOHN OLIVER HOBBES.

JOHN OLIVER HOBBES (MRS. CRAIGIE)

JOHN OLIVER HOBBES is the pseudonym of Mrs. Pearl Mary Teresa Craigie. It appeared first in 1891, in the Pseudonym Library, over the study entitled "Some Emotions and a Moral." It is related that the first publisher to whom that story was offered accepted it on condition that the author find another title and make other lesser changes. She refused to make a single change, and the work finally went to a more courageous — and, we may say, — longer-headed publisher. "The author proposes and the publisher disposes," is not an every-day maxim.

Mrs. Craigie (doubtless many readers

will be surprised to learn it) was born in Boston, Mass., on Nov. 3, 1867. Her mother's maiden name was Laura Hortense Arnold. Her father, John Morgan Richards, is the son of the Rev. James Richards, D.D., the founder of Auburn Theological Seminary, New York. Pearl was educated first privately, by tutors, then in Paris, and then in London, where, for a good many years, her father has chosen to reside. In London she was a pupil at University College. There she studied the ancient classics enthusiastically; and there she attracted the attention of the well-known Professor Goodwin, by whose advice, later, she took up literature as a profession.

In 1887, at the age of nineteen, she was married to Mr. Reginald Walpole Craigie, a member of a well-established English family. Four years after the marriage she

left her husband, taking with her their child, John Churchill Craigie, who was born in August, 1890; and in 1895 the separation culminated in a divorce. Since then Mrs. Craigie and her son have lived with her parents at 56 Lancaster Gate, W., London. Her amusements are music and chess.

This, in brief, is the biography of one of the most brilliant figures in contemporary English literature. And we hasten to claim her for America, for, notwithstanding her long residence abroad, notwithstanding her English interests and associations, she is at heart, we hear, "a very staunch American." But, in the first place, she is an intellectual cosmopolite. Her gifts have brought back to her a welcome from wherever men and women read English; and to-day English is the language of the four corners of the globe.

In one respect, Mrs. Craigie reminds us of her greatest hero, Robert Orange. We do not need to lift the veil of domesticity to form the opinion that married life half-stifled her ambition. She was not born to serve two masters. Orange was too sincere a man to take advantage of Parflete's death. His heart said "Rome," and to Rome he went; and we can see him going, tranquilly yet determinedly. In some such manner, we fancy, Mrs. Craigie must have gone back to her father's house. Literally, too, she went to Rome, for she became a Roman Catholic in 1892, the year following the separation from her husband.

The year 1891 was doubly momentous. It saw not only her departure from under her husband's roof, but also the publication of her first book, "Some Emotions and a Moral." We have been informed

that eighty thousand copies were sold in a few weeks; anyhow, it is a positive fact that the book was one of the sensations of the day. For a long while the reading public remained incredulous over the announcement that the author was a woman. It was not merely the pseudonym, John Oliver Hobbes, that excited the incredulity; it was also the form and the style of the book itself.

Mrs. Craigie once remarked that women are at a disadvantage in picturing men in their relations one to the other, particularly in the intimate relations of the mess-room and the smoking-room, and she cited Jane Austen's consummate tact in eluding the difficulty by keeping men apart, or, rather, by keeping them in the society of women. It oftentimes demands consummate tact to enforce the realization of a limitation; and in an artist the inability

to paint things as they are seen is certainly a grave limitation. Of such a limitation the author of "Robert Orange" — we mention her most notable book — betrays no consciousness, for it is not in her. She affords us the enjoyment rather of consummate skill than of consummate tact. Therein she resembles, not Jane Austen, but George Eliot.

At the same time, we remember that when "Robert Orange" was the rage, some critics charged Mrs. Craigie with a lack of the power of convincing. "This is a fanciful hero," they declared. "Can a man love a woman so humanly, so deliriously as is herein depicted," asked one of them, "while being simultaneously drawn toward the monastic life?" The novelist gave the best of answers — that Robert Orange was no mere production of the imagination, no embodiment of an idea, but a study from life.

The fact is, to make use of the novelist's expression, "Character is infinitely various, and the possibilities of action are inexhaustible. When a fictitious personage does or says an incredible thing — of course I am not speaking of fairy tales, but of fiction that bears some relation to fact — it is incredible, not in the abstract, as it were, but because it is wrongly correlated to the individual character. Speaking for myself, I hate and distrust plausibility. No writer is so little plausible as Balzac. His people are as full of surprises as our own most intimate friends!"

We recall the comment that Mrs. Craigie's pages are filled with such subtle observations, straight philosophy and shining epigrams that they must be read slowly to be enjoyed. They are indeed, as a rule, pages relishable to the last word. Their psychology is always interesting and some-

times deeply affecting. They are pages not made to suit Marion Crawford's dictum, that a novel should be mere entertainment — assuming that his definition of entertainment goes no further than shivers and laughs. They who have found Mr. Crawford's "In the Palace of the King" the best of entertainment may have gone to sleep over Mrs. Craigie's "The School for Saints." Plausibility is not always to be distrusted. How prolix to such persons must have seemed the pages describing the journey of the hero and the heroine of "Robert Orange" to St. Malo. Orange had suddenly plunged from irresolution into marriage, and, as he looked down on Brigit's face in the starlight, his secret ideals returned to trouble him. The author suddenly plunges into the philosophy of the situation:

"Men's designs are never so indefinite

and confused as when they meet with no outward resistance. A close attack has proved the salvation of most human wills and roused the energy of many drooping convictions. It is seldom good that one should enter into any vocation very easily, sweetly, and without strife. The best apprenticeships, whether ecclesiastical or religious, or civil or military, or political or artistic, are never the most calm. Whether we study the lives of saints or the lives of those distinguished in any walk of human endeavor where perfection, in some degree or other, has been at least the goal, we always find that the first years of the pursuit have been one bitter history of temptations, doubts, despondencies, struggles, and agonizing inconsistencies of volition. To natures cold originally, or extinguished by a false asceticism, many seeming acts of sacrifice are but the subtle

indulgence of that curious selfishness which is not the more spiritual because it is independent of others, or the less repulsive because it is most contented in its isolation from every responsibility. A renunciation means the deliberate putting away of something keenly loved, anxiously desired, or actually possessed; it does not mean a well-weighed acceptance of the lesser, rather than the greater, trials of life."

All this in a breath, we may say; and yet, a dozen lines further on, begins another page of philosophical speculations. Mrs. Craigie is not content to paint the body: she must paint the soul also. For the most part they are the speculations met on the road from Aristotle to Cardinal Newman; but, for the most part, too, they have been freshened and garnished in the novelist's analytical mind. Her analytical faculties seem to have undergone a large development

during the period of her domestic trouble and religious doubts. It was then, for the first time, that her mind came into contact with the minds of the great Christian psychologists. "Has it ever struck you," she asked a visitor casually, "that the Church of Rome, which alone among the churches of Western Europe enjoins and enforces continual examinations of conscience, is the real creator of modern analytical fiction? The Fathers of the Church are the fathers of psychology. St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bernard, and Abelard — where will you find subtler soul-searching than in their writings?"

In soul-searching, the author of "Love and the Soul-Hunters" — an appropriate title for the moment — is not excelled by any of her contemporaries, not even by the chirurgical dare-devil, Gabriele d'Annunzio. Yet she has also written passages of heart-

touching tenderness, nor is she above smiles and little satires. Indeed, to mention love, who that ever reads it can soon forget the impassioned confession of Lady Sara-Louise-Tatiana-Valérie De Treverell:

". . . I never say my prayers, because I cannot say them, but I love somebody, too. Whenever I hear his name I could faint. When I see him I could sink into the ground. At the sight of his handwriting I grow cold from head to foot, I tremble, my heart aches so that it seems breaking in two. I long to be with him, yet when I am with him I have nothing to say. I have to escape and be miserable all alone. He is my thought all day: the last before I sleep, the first when I awake. I could cry, and cry, and cry. I try to read, and I remember not a word. I like playing best, for then I can almost imagine that he is listening. But when I stop playing and

look round, I find myself in an empty room. It is awful! I call his name; no one answers. I whisper it; still no answer. I throw myself on the ground, and I say, 'Think of me! think of me! you shall, you must, you do think of me!' It is great torture and a great despair. Perhaps it is a madness, too. But it is my way of loving. I want to live while I live. If I knew for certain that he loved me — me only — the joy, I think, would kill me. Love! Do you know, poor little angel, what it means? Sometimes it is a curse."

It is more than plausible that Pensée, who had to listen to this, was really "shaking like some small flower in a violent gale."

Lately Mrs. Craigie has done some writing for the stage. Without question the best of her plays is "The Ambassador,"

which fulfils Mr. Howells's ideal, for like one of the best of Oscar Wilde's plays or Mr. Pinero's, it is as lustrous between covers as in the theatre. But all in all, our heroine's career as a playwright has not been a flattering experience, and we were not unprepared for her recent statement that "the public does not want to think in the theatre, or to have the serious aspects of life forced upon its attention. What it chiefly wants is flattery," and so on, in the traditional manner of the fallen idol. Fortunately, perhaps, for the reputation of Alexander, he had no other worlds to conquer.

"Love and the Soul-Hunters" is the novel on which Mrs. Craigie has been working lately. She writes us that she also has in mind a serial story for *Harper's* and a play.

The novelist is described as "a slender

woman, not very tall, but very well built. Her face, eyes and hair are dark, and she has a wonderful sort of personal magnetism which, her friends believe, would have served her well had she gone on the stage." She has occasionally gone to a convent to write, for her temperament demands tranquillity. When in London she writes in the library, which is on the first floor of the Richards house. In the summer most of her work is done at Steephill Castle, Isle of Wight.

She sits for hours ruminating on her plots, then she writes, rapidly, accurately. Literally she transfers the story chapter by chapter from her mind to the paper on the table before her. In society she is said to have been admired — mostly for her intellectual charms — since her school days. Although not robust in health — she generally spends the winter in the south of

Europe or in Egypt — she does an amount of work that quite nullifies the effect of her remark to Mr. Archer ("Real Conversations," in the *Critic*) that "in all our speculations upon the differences of faculty in the two sexes, we are rather apt to forget the effect of the fundamental difference in mere bodily power of endurance."

Cop ·right, 1899, by G. W. Varney, Chicago.

LILIAN BELL.

LILIAN BELL
(MRS. BOGUE)

LILIAN BELL (Mrs. Arthur Hoyt Bogue) may justly take pride in her originality and her enthusiasm. She is one of the most forceful figures in American literature. What she writes is as far from conventionality, as the sun is distant from the earth. She is young, and, like every other original and enthusiastic person, she has her faults — faults technical as well as temperamental. But we must credit her with the purpose of living to learn, and though, as in her best work, "The Expatriates," there is some dross mingled with the gold, the dross will all be smelted out some day. Then she will move a round higher on the ladder.

Her writings largely reflect her own ex-

periences and her own opinions. For instance, two years ago, in Boston, speaking of the United States army, she said:

"The men are splendidly brave, intelligent and efficient so far as the little force goes; but the minute an army officer gets away from the barracks he puts on civilian's dress, and that, to my mind, is entirely wrong. There ought to be a rule compelling officers and men in our army to wear their uniforms at all times. This would keep the army in the people's minds, and make them realize that it is a real thing and a part of the nation that they can be proud of.... You never see army officers on the streets or in public places in uniform; they act as if they were ashamed of it. I am proud of our army and I think we ought to make more of it than we do. If I were a man there 'd be no other career on earth for me. My brother is an officer, and it is the

delight of my heart that he is permanently in the service, and employed in the defence of my beautiful America, and that he will live his whole life under the shadow of the flag." (Her brother, to whom, by the way, her latest story, "Sir John and the American Girl," is dedicated, is a lieutenant in the 17th Infantry, U. S. A., now stationed in the Philippines.)

Rose Hollenden expresses virtually the same sentiments in "The Expatriates." Indeed, in that singularly interesting and strangely abused novel you will find many traces of the author's experiences and opinions. You may remember the episode at the reception given by the American ambassador to France, Mr. Sharp:

"But suddenly Rose saw the tall, bent figure of the American ambassador approaching. As he neared the Marquise d'Auteil, she turned from Prince Orloff,

and, mistaking Mr. Sharp for a servant, she said, in a distinct tone which everybody heard:

"Garçon, call the carriage of the Marquise d'Auteil!"

The incident took us back to what Lilian Bell had said in an interview, long before the publication of the book, — when she was at work on it, no doubt, — that "our ambassadors ought to have a uniform or some sort of dress to distinguish them from the common herd." Superficially the sentiment is not democratic; but it was the author's sense of dignity that spoke. She related how she attended an important ball at the French capital. "The ambassadors from other nations appeared in splendid uniforms. They looked like somebodies. Even little Portugal, and Brazil, and Peru, and Mexico, were represented by men who kept up the dignity and the importance of

their states; while the ambassador of the United States could not be told from the waiters, except that they were better dressed. It is outrageous. No wonder they despise us abroad."

Times have changed, and European tempers, too, we may be permitted to remark. But a comparison of Mrs. Bogue's writings and sayings is forced upon the critic who would do justice to her work, inasmuch as it generally shows her to be consistent. We sincerely believe that she is a woman who practices what she preaches. She is not frivolous and imaginative; she is decidedly serious and intellectual.

She inherits her lively patriotism. Her father, Maj. William W. Bell, served his country gallantly during the Civil War, and so did her grandfather, Gen. Joseph Warren Bell, who, though a Southerner, sold and freed his slaves before the war,

brought his family North, and organized the 13th Illinois Cavalry. Among the Virginian patriots at the time of the Revolution was her great-great-grandfather, Captain Thomas Bell.

Lilian Bell was born in Chicago in 1867, but she was brought up in Atlanta. At an early age she took pleasure in writing. She once said:

"I wrote my first story at the age of eight. Later, when I was in school, there was a certain girl whom I loved, and still love, devotedly. She so detested writing essays that she would let her general average drop twenty per cent., for she always got zero for being unprepared. She was older than I by two years, but a little mite of a thing, and I worshiped her so much that I used to write the essays for her. Usually I 'd ask her, about two hours before they had to be handed in, 'Written your essay?'

No, she couldn 't write it. 'What's your subject?' Then I would write it for her; and I used to take the keenest enjoyment in writing it as she would have written it, in looking at it from her point of view, and making the thing sound like her. It used to be a source of great glee to me that I could get her a hundred every time, though I couldn 't always get that much for myself; they marked according to supposed ability. Later I wrote various novels of interminably long chapters, and read them to four or five wondering girls who used to come to my house Fridays to stay over Sunday. No, those were never published. My mother burned them, together with a voluminous diary I thought I was keeping. She 's been ever so good to me in heaps of ways! Still later I began writing for a newspaper. I was getting the magnificent sum of eight dollars a column, and was n't spending a cent

of it — just saving it to look at. One day an old friend said to me: 'Are you writing much now?' I said: 'Yes, and every line I write gets printed.' 'That 's too bad,' said he; 'I 'm very sorry.' 'Why, what do you mean?' said I. 'If everything you write gets printed, it shows you 're not advancing.' That was startling. I stopped writing entirely after that, and read — oh, how I devoured books and magazines, trying to see how people that could write did things, trying to get hold of the elements of style, trying, in short, to master English.

"I began to write things and sent them out, and they always came back promptly. I did n't care; I sent them out again and kept on writing. . . . One day an idea for a story occurred to me, and I wrote 'The Heart of Brier Rose' and sent it to the Harpers, who accepted it and asked for more. Soon after that I wrote 'The Love Affairs,' and sent

that to them. They accepted it, and since then everything I 've written has been engaged beforehand. But don't imagine I work by contract. I never could and never will engage to do a certain piece of work in a given time. There 's merely an understanding that if I write a story and send it along they 'll take it."

Zola himself could not desire a more flattering arrangement.

Mrs. Bogue was twenty-six when, in 1893, "The Love Affairs of an Old Maid" was published. Her wit was green then, but her uncommon sense of humor was ripe. She is too serious, too objective, to be a first-water humorist; nor has she ever had a desire to be one, we understand.

A Chicago writer has given us a story illustrating Lilian Bell's characteristic sense of humor. It seems that soon after her graduation from Dearborn Seminary, Chicago,

she was invited to read an essay on "Literary Women of Germany in the Middle Ages" at an alumnæ entertainment. Lilian discovered a scarcity of material, and she so reported. "Very well, Miss Bell, I see you do not care to accommodate me," said the principal, "I shall have to disappoint our guests." "No, no," protested the young graduate. "If you insist upon it I will do the best I can." The story goes on:

"So Miss Bell wrote a most remarkable account of the literary women of Germany in the Middle Ages. There was a score of them, all of surprising brilliancy. They guided not only the culture of the country, but the politics, and the social life of the court. Nothing of importance happened without their participation. The most renowned of the group, after passing through all sorts of adventures, jumped through an open window, four stories up, attempting to

descend safely by using her umbrella as a parachute. The parachute failed to work. She was dashed to bits, and the miserable prince whose attentions had driven her to the fatal step, went away to war, threw himself in the forefront of the battle and was killed. At judicious intervals in her essay Miss Bell inserted the names and meagre history of three literary women who had really existed. The composition was a great success. All the cultured guests, many of them members of Chicago's literary set, commended its erudition and its dramatic interest.

"I knew you could give us something good if you only tried, my dear," said the lady principal, all smiles. Miss Bell then coolly announced that she had been trying her hand at romance, in the absence of facts."

"Every book, that is, every real book,"

says Mrs. Bogue, "has in it something which the writer could not have helped putting into it, and which no one else could have put into it by main strength. One of the things I have cared about particularly is to be an individual, not a member of a group or of a class. I think it is more worth while if your work is a thing of its own kind — if, in it, you are yourself, instead of being merely a woman who has done good work in common with others, along a certain line. I 'd rather elude classification; I should hate to be pigeon-holed."

Yet some critics have had the poor judgment to classify her as a writer of "light fiction" and of "summer literature."

The reader will find an excellent sample of her vehement satire in the description in "The Expatriates" of the concert aboard the St. Louis. There is a moral as

well as fun in the discomfiture of the Americans that could not sing "The Star Spangled Banner."

"It is queer," remarks the novelist, in discussing her work, "how differently books write themselves. The first chapter of 'The Love Affairs' is exactly like the first draft. It suited me. The first chapter of 'A Little Sister to the Wilderness,' was written thirty-two times. That is the only one of my books that has been written from the outside, and it was the hardest to write. For other good reasons, I 'll never write another book except from the inside. Nobody has ever yet found out what I wrote 'The Under Side of Things' for, not even a single critic. I don't believe anybody ever will, either. Probably I did not make it plain enough."

In regard to her daily work Mrs. Bogue writes us: "I work every morning and

generally manage to read one book a day — biographies and books of philosophy, which I often reread if they throw particular light on characters. In my writing I am not so rapid. I sometimes rewrite a paragraph or chapter twenty or more times." She spent two years on "The Expatriates," her most noteworthy book, visiting Europe twice during that time and reviewing her work with men and women of trustworthy judgment. "The 'white heat' I am accused of," she says, "was sober morning judgment and the purest of motives, to instruct an American public distinguished by its ignorance of the subjects of which I wrote."

In May, 1900, Lilian Bell's marriage to Mr. Arthur Hoyt Bogue of Chicago, gave rise to many a joke. The jokers were especially delighted to quote the blistering witticisms in "From a Girl's Point of

View." Here is a specimen of the comments that went the rounds of the press:

"In 'From a Girl's Point of View' Miss Bell deplores and ridicules the man under thirty-five. She calls him raw, crude, unformed, untrained, egotistical, and other uncomplimentary names. The fact that Mr. Bogue is several years under thirty-five, gives her views added piquancy."

A short time ago Mr. and Mrs. Bogue moved to New York.

From one who has met her we get this glimpse of the author: "She is a tall, fine-looking woman, with a superb carriage, though not a strong physique; and she dresses stunningly, though a mere man would discover only that she was perfectly gowned." And she is said to have glorious eyes.

Lilian Bell's readings have been enjoyed West and East, North and South; and, as

she wrote of Rose Hollenden, so we may write of her, that she knows "her own country from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Seattle to Tampa."

RUTH McENERY STUART.

RUTH McENERY STUART

THE fact that a spirit of commercialism is creeping into the old Latin or Creole quarter of New Orleans was well exemplified by the sign that a small bootmaker, who had evidently been studying the up-to-date conversational advertisements in the daily papers, recently hung over his door. Translated literally, it read: "Oh, my God! Shoes half soled for fifty cents!"

It is, however, the old, the picturesque, and the thoroughly lazy New Orleans of which Ruth McEnery Stuart has written, and it is with the "yaller gals," the Creoles, the plantation negroes, the "cunnels" and the "majahs," that she is thoroughly at home. It is true that she has

touched upon places that have been thoroughly covered by others, for the whole theme of the southern negro and his surroundings has been well treated by George W. Cable, with his "Cajians" and Creoles; by Thomas Nelson Page, with "Marse Channins'" devoted body-servant, and his Virginian field bards; by Joel Chandler Harris, with his chronicles of "Brer Rabbit," "Brer Bar," and the lesser animals, and by Virginia Frazer Boyle, with her voudoo and devil tales; but Mrs. Stuart has given us glimpses of this life that have been permeated with her own personality, and the possibilities among these archaic and most accessible people have been many.

Perhaps the negro poet, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, of recent years has given us better and more sympathetic songs of the plantation life, which is so rapidly disappearing,

than other expositors of southern scenes and scenery; but although Mrs. Stuart has not written voluminously, those poems and short stories which have, upon rare occasions, drifted into the different newspapers and periodicals, have shown an appreciation of the curious rhythm of the plantation song, and its innocent spirit and childish repetitions, which stamp them as truthful expositions of those unintellectual and simple minds that few Americans know well enough to interpret.

What, in truth, could more faithfully exhibit the spirit of the ante-bellum darky than the poem called "Daddy Do-Funny," which only recently appeared in *St. Nicholas?* "Ole Daddy Do-Funny," with his list of "miseries," is a typical plantation daddy.

The author of such a truly valuable addition to American folk-song was bred

in the very hotbed of negro superstition and voudoo worship. She was born at Avoyelles parish, Louisiana, and was the daughter of a wealthy family of planters who had always been slaveholders, and were life-long residents of the State. In early childhood she was taken to New Orleans, where her father was in business, and there she was educated at public and private schools, and there remained until her marriage in 1879 to Alfred O. Stuart, who owned large cotton plantations in Arkansas. Of her married life she has recently informed a newspaper paragrapher: "During my married life I lived on my husband's plantation in Arkansas, and most of my negro character-studies have come from my association with the negroes while there. We lived right among them — there were hundreds of negroes to one white person. My Arkansas life covered

about five years, from 1879 to late in 1883. Two plantations were owned by my husband, although we did not live on either of them, but in a little town near by, and I can see the darkies now, riding in on their mules, hitching them to the mulberry trees in our yard, sitting in rows upon our front steps, 'restin'' and 'foolin' roun'' generally. Some old 'aunty' would surely come walking in every morning with a battered tin pail on her arm, filled with perfectly worthless berries, gathered up by the wayside, not to sell, but 'ter swap fur jes a leetle flour, please ma'am, an' a pinch er butter, honey, an' a couple er lumps er sugar, please ma'am, Mis' Stuart.' Then there was an old 'uncle,' who used to sit silently fishing all day long in a shallow pool, with his under lip stuck out phenomenally far, even for a negro's, who, when anyone asked him, 'Say, uncle, what 's that you 've got

in your mouth?' would reply laconically, 'Wums,' and shut his tongue down upon his imprisoned bait again."

Of her first literary endeavors she has also said: "I was never a great reader, but was more fond of people than books, though, I had my favorite authors, as every girl has — still, I was not a great reader. I have always felt interested in the common folk, but never thought seriously about writing them up until after my husband's death. It was in 1887 that I first thought about writing, and in 1888 my first story was published. I sent two stories to the Harpers. It was in this way I wrote an anonymous letter to them, and in reply received a very pleasant note from Mr. Charles Dudley Warner, who afterward sent one of my stories to Professor Sloane of the *Princeton Review*, and kept one for *Harper's Magazine*. The *Prince-*

ton Review thus happened to be the first magazine to print a story for me.

"As to my writing dialect, I did not do it intentionally. I simply wrote dialect stories because when I demanded of myself a story, it was the recollection of the negroes which made it possible for me to write it. I could not help writing dialect.

"My characters are all drawn from imagination. I have found that in writing stories, facts or bits taken from life intact, hamper instead of help me. There is always a question as to the real incidents fitting naturally into a new situation. I always fancy I can see the stitches around the patch. Besides, is it not true that the real incident that suggests itself for use is apt to be attractive for its exceptional character? Hence it is not true to life. It was noticeable in life for this very reason. When it is put into a story, since it

cannot be taken with its entire commonplace setting, it loses its relative value — it 's out of drawing and false.

"I try to devote the first half of each day to my desk, and this is my rule. My favorite work hours are those of the early morning, from about six to breakfast-time. As to my favorite authors of fiction — I might name George Eliot, George Meredith, and Victor Hugo: and among our own authors I esteem none more highly than Mary E. Wilkins and James Lane Allen; but it is difficult to select a few lights from a galaxy so brilliant that each of a score of names would be familiar to everyone. As to my literary ambitions — oh, don't ask me. I am now doing stories, and am in arrears with my engagements."

Since the death of her husband, Mrs. Stuart has resided in New York City and here she has done most of her lite-

rary work. A list of her books includes: "Moriah's Mourning"; "In Simpkinsville"; "A Golden Wedding"; "Carlotta's Intended"; "Solomon Crow's Christmas Pockets"; "The Story of Babette"; "Sonny," and "Holly and Pizen." She is not only an indefatigable worker, but also a reader of considerable reputation, and, although not a professional elocutionist or one of the modern "reciters," interprets her own writings with great vivacity and effect. "Her pictures of Louisiana life, both white and colored, are indeed the best we have," Charles Dudley Warner has said, "— truthful, humorous, and not seldom pathetic, but never overdrawn or sentimental. Not a little of her success in presenting them to an audience lies in her power to reproduce her characters in accent and dialect, and in such a manner that we see them as they really are."

She is slender and graceful, and wears her dark-brown hair thrown softly back from her face in half-pompadour style, and has the delightful accent of the southland. Her hobby is to study mycology, and each year she finds several months' pleasure in the difficult pursuit of the one-legged mushroom. She is likewise engaged in the collection of aboriginal baskets, which represent the feelings of both art and utility of half-civilized peoples in various parts of the world. A great many paragraphers have been pleased to comment upon her as being a "normal domestic woman," which is indeed what she really is, as she is an excellent housekeeper and likes to dabble in cookery and other arts of the household.

Perhaps she has written nothing more thoroughly "coon" than "Uncle Ephe's Advice to Brer Rabbit," which faithfully demonstrates her ability as a chronicler

of plantation echoes, and well exemplifies the poetic mind of the dense, but tuneful, negro of the cotton-field and the cane-brake.

The lilt of

> Hoppit — lippit! Bull-frog gait!
> Hoppit — lippit — lippit — hoppit!
> Goodness me, why don't you stop it?

has in it the onomatopoetic quality of genuine barbaric verse.

Mrs. Stuart's self-confessed lack of "bookish" traits is perhaps one secret of her success in her own field. She is versed in the study of the simple characters into whose lives she has so fully entered as no student of mere letters could be. The author of "Sonny" and the Simpkinsville stories well deserves her creditable rank among the American writers of genre fiction.

ANNA FARQUHAR.

ANNA FARQUHAR (MRS. BERGENGREN)

"I WAS twenty-two years old when I first went to Boston to visit the family of my father's eldest brother, Mr. John Allston, who at an early age there settled into business prosperity."

Thus did a comparatively unknown writer, who passed by the name of Margaret Allston, introduce herself to the readers of the *Ladies' Home Journal* in a series of chapters called "Her Boston Experiences." She had something to say — something witty, something satirical, something caustic. It was about baked beans, Beacon Hill, and the people who live near by; and she said it under a name of gentle and truly puritanic simplicity, and quite in accord with the honest shafts of

sarcasm she not only aimed at the dwellers of the Hub, but had before plunged, with satire quite as delicate and sharp, into that cosmopolitan assemblage of notables known as Washington society.

"The Inner Experiences of a Cabinet Officer's Wife" had been a faithful picture of the complexity of ambitions, which the outsider who has eyes to see, ears to hear, and wit to appreciate, would be astonished to meet with at the Capital. It had been so true to life, in fact, that certain personages began to remove the beam in their own eyes, and, with delicate introspection, to question themselves and wonder if some of the characters were not within their own lives, and, as nothing interests the world (especially the feminine world) more than gossip or than skeleton-in-the-closet history, it became immediately essential to that great assemblage which is directly

answerable to the movement of governmental cog-wheels, to find out what a certain person who had more keenness of perception and more literary ability than they, was saying about them. That is what made this author an interrogation point which many desired to have explained. And that is the reason why "The Inner Experiences of a Cabinet Officer's Wife" was a story that found itself beside the glimmer of an unusual number of lamps upon an unusual number of library tables.

There are certain characteristics which men admire in each other above all others. There are certainly some characteristics which they do not expect to find in women, or, if they do expect to find them, they always imagine them to be far less developed than in one of their own sex. That is the reason why the answer to the inter-

rogation point above is, in many respects, a remarkable individual.

Margaret Allston's real name, until January, 1900, was Anna Farquhar, and as Anna Farquhar and as Anna Farquhar Bergengren she has possessed the quality of perseverance in an extraordinary measure.

Of Scotch-English ancestry, the forebears of Anna Farquhar first came to America in Lord Baltimore's time and were ceded property of considerable extent at a distance of some forty miles from Baltimore, in Maryland. To this blood may perhaps be traced her ardent affiliation with English friends and sympathy with English thinkers. She was born December 23, 1865, at Brookville, Indiana, her father being lawyer and congressman. Thus the author of certain phases of Washington life was early associated with diplomacy and diplomatic

ideas. After a short residence in Cincinnati, Ohio, her family moved to Indianapolis, where Mr. Farquhar became president of one of the foremost city banks. Here the daughter received the usual education that falls to the lot of an American girl whose family are in the best of circumstances. Similar to James Russell Lowell and other persons who left names of merit in literature or in art, her particular aversion was the study of mathematics. While still quite young she showed a distinct inclination toward languages and history, and an overwhelming love for music. At sixteen she attended a boarding-school in Maryland, but soon returned to a life of the gayest society, "educating her heels far better than her head will ever be educated."

But this life soon palled upon the girl with ambition, for she had now determined

upon a career and to obtain for herself a musical education. In order to realize the money for its pursuit, the family property was mortgaged and she left her native town for Boston. The death of her father several years before had made this a possibility. Here she struggled nobly to cultivate her voice and soon received recognition of her growing musical powers by appointment to a position in a church choir. But the raw east winds of New England had already begun to undermine a constitution never very robust, and her throat was so affected that further study was useless.

The next few years of life were a gallant fight to attain sufficient strength to warrant a strenuous application to the musical career she was so bent upon, and a residence in the genial Maryland climate and in New York and Washington stimulated the hope that, in the end, she might accom-

plish the longed-for results of her pains and energy.

It was now she first applied herself to literary work, for, not being able to sing, she found in this an outlet for artistic expression. The next years were a period of toil, of sickness, and of renewed literary endeavor.

As a teacher of singing she was still able to keep in touch with music, and, under the skillful treatment of a New York physician the lost voice gradually returned, but it was very unstable. A visit to England shortly after a short residence in Boston, where she had held an editorship on a periodical devoted to music, decided her future career. The years of patient endeavor to be a musician had unfortunately been wasted as far as permanent results were concerned, for, said London's foremost teacher of music, "Your phys-

ique and temperament can never stand the strain of the musical life." This was indeed a sad blow, but the many disappointments which had come in years gone by had perhaps prepared her for the acknowledgment of failure — not in willingness, or in fortitude, or in bravery, but in physical strength to stand the wear and tear of an exacting and strenuous profession. It is for this grit and determination that Anna Farquhar is admired by her friends, and it is for this reason that her literary career has been a succession of upward steps upon the rungs of the ladder of literary fame.

She herself says that hers is the gospel of work, that for years her life has been one of unremitting hard labor and struggle for very existence. A motto which hung in her room during her years of fierce combat bore the words "All things come

round to those who will but wait." "And," she says, "to this I added out of my own belief, 'and work.' Work is the highest privilege and hope of mankind. And of late years I have taken to myself the beautiful Italian proverb 'When God shuts a door he opens a window.'" These are incidents which but prove her indomitable spirit of perseverance.

"A Singer's Heart," published in Boston, was her first literary endeavor, and to some extent expressed the professional ambitions which she herself had experienced in her musical career. Although it was not a "popular" production, its notices were most flattering, and when a certain Philadelphia paper of distinct literary conservatism bought twelve copies for its editorial staff, her spirits were naturally raised and stimulated to renewed endeavor.

"The Inner Experiences of a Cabinet

Officer's Wife" she was well qualified to pen, for the associations she had formed with the life of the Capital were those which eminently fitted her for a description of the inside political and social workings of its complexities. A host of personal letters which crowded her mail showed that some shafts had struck dangerous ground, but the story swung gracefully on, through threatened libel suits and denunciations of every description. "There was not a single specific and living character in city life that was intentionally put down," she says, "with perhaps one exception, and that was of a woman, and by her permission."

"The Professor's Daughter" first appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, when it had its great expansion, a few years ago. It was the story of simple people in a simple Rhode Island country neighbor-

hood, whose characteristics she well knew, for among them she has lived a quiet, studious life for many summers. It contained that human element which has made both Shakespeare and Mark Twain immortal, and it was very popular.

"Her Boston Experiences," which first appeared in a magazine, ran through many editions in book form. As some worthy New Englander has said: "Any good Bostonian who doesn't mind a bit of satire at his own expense may send this description of his beloved city to strangers and foreigners with the serene conviction that they will thus gain a better idea of the place and society than any number of guide-books could afford." It was trenchant, frank and comic, and gave an excellent picture of many sides of Boston life. It stopped at least one sale of real estate by a satirical slap at a part of town

the reputation of which was morally questionable, and it is said that a Cambridge professor has permanently annexed it to his lectures, to be read to the students as an antidote for some of his dryest hours.

But this was not art of the highest type, and a woman who had studied the lives of Carlyle, Huxley, Darwin, Spencer, and other great thinkers of the middle nineteenth century, in order to imbibe their spirit of work and energy, was naturally desirous of accomplishing something of greater and more lasting artistic excellence.

As a result of a sympathetic acquaintance with the territory occupied by the French Jesuits at the earliest period of their missionary efforts in North America, and also with Mr. Parkman's history of their vigorous lives, she received a vivid impression of the romantic possibilities of that period. This led to a rapid devel-

opment of the romantic complications surrounding the hero of "The Devil's Plough," but the study of the French characteristics and habits of the seventeenth century required the painstaking investigation of several months before the plot could be expanded into a book. The material once at her command, the writing took but a short time. When the book had been completed she was temporarily exhausted; too much dramatic force had been expended in the preparation. As a play, in fact, it was first conceived, and that is why it found such immediate favor with the dramatic profession when it appeared in book form. The story is of a struggle between pure ideals and the baser emotions, in which the higher impulse eventually triumphs. It is not strange then that her feelings were similar to that of a great — perhaps the greatest — American

sculptor, who, after completing a statue of marvelous spirit and expression, was forced to retire to the quiet of a country life for full six months.

In January, 1900, Anna Farquhar was married to Ralph Bergengren, a talented Boston journalist. The marriage took place under circumstances of unusual romance, for they were wedded at the side of her bed of illness, with only two or three witnesses present.

As a type of Anglo-Saxon womanhood Mrs. Bergengren well exhibits her English ancestry. Above the medium height, with light hair, blue eyes, high color, and regular features, her personal appearance distinctly announces the land of her forefathers. That peculiar look of high intellectuality which is so marked in many literary women of our own country, is very prominent in the expression of her face.

As a conversationalist she is brilliant, and is consequently much sought after as an addition to society. "But I seldom go," she says, "because I am here to work, and work and society are fatal and absolute enemies."

Her literary method is to "walk miles and miles when a story comes to me, and when my story-people begin to talk, I sit and stitch on some hand sewing (when a man would smoke) until everything is ready to go down, then it goes like an explosion of ideas, so to speak, followed by careful modelling and severe, searching criticism." With an individual who is so eager in the endeavor to perfect her art, it is indeed to be expected that the masterpiece will yet come, although in her own words she tells us that "I cannot say that I have a conquest of the world in view; my ambition always is simply to do my best."

PAULINE BRADFORD MACKIE.

PAULINE BRADFORD MACKIE (MRS. HOPKINS)

PAULINE BRADFORD MACKIE has distinguished herself as a writer of historical fiction, and for this her work is worthy of close consideration.

Upon the question of the merits and demerits of the historical novel has been spilled a vast amount of good ink. It has been a bitter and long-drawn quarrel and much argument has been used to further the pet opinions of partisans of either side. Yet, when everything is taken into consideration the weight of argument seems to be in the affirmative; for, as an educational factor, is not the historical novel of real value? The hurry and rush in the life of the every-day American is, for the most part, an expenditure of energy towards the

accumulation of riches. The present-day Yankee is more essentially a trader than were his ancient Dutch progenitors, and although the education of the average citizen is high, it has usually been in some specific channel, and to the neglect of that knowledge which has been considered of a superficial character. History is a branch of learning in which the average business mind has not been especially well-grounded in the course of its preliminary training, and that is the reason why the historical novel fills a needed gap in the lives of a busy people.

Dealing honestly with ourselves, we are obliged to acknowledge that there are many and wide breaches in our knowledge of history, and even in the knowledge of the history of our own country. Perhaps the most trivial historical romance that we meet with, may fill a gap that we are

ashamed to acknowledge. It may even stimulate our interest to such an extent that we are desirous of getting the facts first-hand, and search the library shelves for the volume of reference that bears directly upon our subject, and in this way accumulate a number of facts that are certainly of cultivating and broadening influence. The novels of Miss Johnston have done much to foster a concern in the annals of early Colonial Virginia; and two works, the "Life of John Paul Jones" and that of Charles James Fox, were directly dependent upon the popularity of "Richard Carvel." Is it possible to point to a novel of the realistic school which set people to profitable employment of their intellects, and to the discussion of events which have helped to make world history?

The work of Pauline Bradford Mackie does not exhibit the early influences of her

literary career as do the creations of some other authors who have passed through a similar period of apprenticeship. For two years after graduation from the Toledo High School, she was engaged in writing for the *Toledo Blade*, but perhaps with not sufficient seriousness, for, at the time, she was anxious to become an artist, and was almost as busy with the brush and pencil as with the pen.

This career, however, she soon abandoned for that of literature, and although her early contributions to magazines (besides the work upon the paper) were very numerous, she frankly admits that they were so seldom accepted that she has lost all track of them.

Although born in Connecticut, at Fairfield, in 1873, her life has been spent in Ohio. Her father, the Rev. Andrew Mackie, an Episcopal clergyman and grad-

uate of Brown University, was a scholar of repute, and from him she inherits her love for writing and for good literature.

Perhaps no embryo writer of romance, who eventually has made a reputation of worth, had more trying experiences than fell to her when first she essayed the task of authorship. The old *Peterson Magazine* published two of her early ventures, but never paid for them, and the first story for which she was ever paid appeared in *Worthington's Magazine*, which issued only one number subsequent to that in which her article was published. Her first long story, "Mademoiselle de Berny," had a conflicting career with the second, "Ye Lyttle Salem Maide," which possesses a distinctly humorous side. The first had been refused by a Philadelphia house, but, as they wished a girl's story of considerable length, "Ye Lyttle Salem Maide" was written and

sent to them. Again they were dissatisfied, and sent it back with the statement that it was of but forty thousand words in length, and they wished it to be extended to sixty. So it was conscientiously rewritten, and, when the task was completed, word was despatched the critical publishers. Again they were dissatisfied, this time with some point of trivial importance, so the manuscript was promptly forwarded to a New York house, which accepted it under the proviso that it be cut down to thirty thousand words, or ten thousand below the original number. Its patient author once more rewrote the tale from the very beginning, and sent it back. Meanwhile "Mademoiselle de Berny," the first manuscript, had been accepted by the head of a Boston firm, and had appeared upon the bookstands. To its publisher was depatched word of the acceptance of the second manu-

script, and a telegram from him the day following was to the effect that, as the publisher who had risked a venture upon the first book, it was certainly right that he should have the second. The book was accordingly withdrawn from the New York firm, as no contract had yet been signed, and was immediately mailed the second house; but again arose a complication. The head of the firm, who had made all negotiations, seriously objected to the character of Cotton Mather, and likewise wished fifteen thousand words added to the book. So the greater part of the entire manuscript was for the third time rewritten, and in this form it appeared in print. "Since its publication," she tells us, "I have never had the courage to read it through."

In spite of the trials and tribulations of "Ye Lyttle Salem Maide" before her final bow to society, the criticisms of the press

were most favorable to her general appearance, and there was an unusual number of people who made her acquaintance, and did so with pleasurable interest. The scenes of the various fortunes which were her lot took place within the ancient town of Salem, at a time when the narrow-minded and bigoted inhabitants were in the height of the semi-religious frenzy over the crime of witchcraft. The fact that Miss Mackie's grandmother was Mehitable Bradford, a direct descendant of the governor of Massachusetts, is what first turned her fancy to the events she here described, and following the advice of Louisa M. Alcott, who was of the opinion that, to write a book of interest, one must "plunge into the heart of a story and open it with a conversation, allowing the actors to unfold the plot and themselves dramatically," she had produced a story that had unquestioned merit. "Mademoi-

selle de Berny," a romance of Valley Forge and of George Washington, as has been shown, had outdistanced "Ye Lyttle Salem Maide" in a somewhat complicated race for publication.

Perhaps, as an eminent reviewer has remarked, this taste for the historical novel has been greatly stimulated by the war with Spain, for although we, as a nation, have always been patriotic, there has been nothing actively exciting to our patriotism for a whole generation. The battles in Cuba stirred up an endless amount of enthusiasm, and the pleasant consciousness that we were a world power and a great and powerful nation that came to us after the battle of Manila Bay, was something almost new, and something that it took some time to realize. For twenty years or more the patriotic societies had been trying to make us fathers, mothers, sons, daughters,

nephews, nieces and cousins of Colonial and Revolutionary heroes, but with ill success. Now everyone was sure that his ancestors had been sterling heroes with musket and sword, and it was but natural that all should be interested in the times of those who had made the beginnings of the country's greatness. This is a perfectly reasonable argument, but the fact that the realistic school had flooded the great literary sea with a mass of miserable material which people were expected to read and enjoy, yet could not, on account of its absolute worthlessness, is perhaps another reason. The same critic spoken of above has put the matter very tersely. He says:

"We found the workmanship (of the realistic novel) on a par with the hurried stuff that the reporters for the daily newspapers turn out at breakneck speed while

the presses and the newsboys wait. We do not read the novels to be instructed. We are not hungry for sociological facts and conclusions when we take up a book for an evening's entertainment. No, we want to be entertained by being removed out of ourselves. But I would rather be myself and bear with my own infirmities and perplexities than to spend a whole evening with a lot of very dull people in my neighbor's kitchen. Now, your realist of the second or third class takes you into a kitchen through the area door, and he does his very best to make you feel that you are one of that circle of domestics. I have no objection to kitchens and none to domestics. Both, in our present scheme of economy, are necessary. But if I go to a kitchen or am taken there, I want it to be worth while."

In "A Georgian Actress," which ap-

peared in 1900, there was sufficient historical background to appeal to the most disinterested respecter of American history, and a story of considerable interest, told with naïve freshness that was certainly invigorating. The "Georgian Actress" was Mistress Anne Johnson, daughter of Sir William Johnson, agent of King George III. among the Indians, and residing at Johnson Hall on the Mohawk, in the years preceding the Revolution. Here she was brought up in strict seclusion with her younger sister Mary — here called Peggy — and under the tutelage of Madame Van Vrankin, a personage who in youth had jilted Sir William and then married a young Dutch soldier. But the frontier life had not interested her as had the frivolities of social London, and there she spent a gay and joyous existence until the death of her husband in a battle with the Indians. Feel-

ings of the deepest remorse no doubt prompted her to take upon herself the education of Sir William's children, and to leave to them her fortune. A young hunter, Daniel Claus, who subsequently turned out to be Madame Van Vrankin's son, and the heir to her estate, now entered the story, and with him Anne fell desperately in love, but a journey to England which she soon took with her younger sister, temporarily separated the lovers. In London she became the protégé of the immortal Garrick, with whom she appeared upon the stage, but the frontier lover eventually appeared and claimed her as his own. The scenes in London were an excellent portrait of the times of King George the Third, "snuffy old drone from the German hive," and the view of Garrick, who "damned America with polysyllabic orotundity and thoroughness," was quite true

to the conception of him one gathers from histories of the time. The effeminate Horace Walpole and gruff Dr. Johnson were likewise present. The book, in fact, showed genuine good workmanship and study, and gave the reader some valuable knowledge, instead of smearing a homely subject with dirt and other filth, and serving it up with the plea that this was realism and hence should be pleasing to the palate.

One descriptive paragraph is worthy of quotation for the delicate, almost Stevensonian, treatment of the landscape:

"'It is smoke from old Maushape's pipe,' said the Indian, as the hazy air grew bluer, filling the gaps with purple. Morning after morning the sun came up and the delicate hoar-frost vanished like a breath. Each moment of the magic days seemed deliciously prolonged. The tangled branches of the blackberry and the sumac's velvet

plumes flamed along the byways and the outskirts of the forest."

Although it would seem that such a fragile bit of prose must have been written in the very atmosphere of the land in which the scenes of the story were laid, such was not the case. "A Georgian Actress" was written at Berkeley, California, where Mrs. Hopkins had gone with her husband, Dr. Herbert Müller Hopkins, who was a professor at the University, and who now occupies the chair of Latin at Trinity College, Hartford, Conn. Here, too, her latest novel, dealing with Washington life during the Civil War, was written. It is called "The Washingtonians," and in it she has forsaken the Colonial period of American history, in which she has been so successful, for that of a later date, and one that is better known to the readers of the present day. For this reason, it will be more difficult to please.

Mrs. Hopkins is fond of gardening, of flowers, and of long walks. She is likewise fond of animals and has several beautiful Irish setters. One handsome dog she recently lost was named Shamrock, and was of such a noble nature that she has in mind a story to write of him. Perhaps it will be her next venture.

MARY JOHNSTON.

MARY JOHNSTON

EARLY in 1898 the manuscript of a Virginian romance came to the Boston office of Houghton, Mifflin & Co. bearing a new name — Mary Johnston. In time the manuscript passed through the hands of half a dozen readers, who approved it unanimously, and it was published under the title of "Prisoners of Hope." That was not its original title, by the way; but it was the title finally agreed upon by the author and the publishers. The instantaneous success of "Prisoners of Hope," and the quick bound of its writer to a place among the literary celebrities of the country, are facts too well known to dilate upon.

We may at this point pardonably remark

upon the readiness with which Miss Johnston was admitted into the company of novelists related to one of our foremost publishing houses. Her case is not an exception: it is the rule. The notion that the young author must sail against contrary winds is still, apparently, as prevalent as ever. To be sure, now and then, it seems to be a very substantial notion. We know that Stephen Crane's "Maggie" was first rejected, and afterward — when it became popular — claimed by a certain publisher. "Helen's Babies," another book notable for its popularity, was ragged from travel when accepted. There are other noteworthy instances of publishers' hindsight or unwisdom; but, even taken collectively, they do not constitute the rule. So, we mention the fate of the "Prisoners of Hope," the first work of a writer with neither name nor influence, as an example of the general

recognition of talent by American publishers.

Miss Johnston, at the time of the publication of her first novel, was twenty-eight. She was born in Buchanan, Virginia, just where the winding James pushes its way through the Blue Ridge, on November 21, 1870. Her great-great-great-grandfather, Peter Johnston, came to Virginia by way of Holland early in the eighteenth century. He brought with him wealth and influence. One of the memorials of his beneficence is the land on which stands the college of Hampden-Sidney. He had three sons, Peter, Andrew and Charles. Peter, the eldest, who rode in Light Horse Harry Lee's legion, was the father of General Joseph E. Johnston. The second son, Andrew, was the author's great-great-grandfather. He married Anna Nash, through whom Miss Johnston is descended from Colonel John Nash,

a valiant figure in the French and Indian wars, and, during the Revolution, the member from Prince Edward County in the Virginia House of Delegates. There were other distinguished Nashes — John, of Templeton Manor, in 1738, Justice of Henrico County, Virginia; Abner, a member of the Continental Congress, and at one time governor of North Carolina; Francis, — General Nash, — who fell at Germantown. On her mother's side, the author of "Prisoners of Hope" is strongly Scotch-Irish — a lineage which runs back to one of the thirteen apprentices that closed the gates of Londonderry during the siege of 1680. Thirty years ago her mother was described as a "gentle, shy young creature," with a "dowry of sweet, feminine traits."

The father of the author, John William Johnston, started life humbly in the village of Buchanan. His mother, too, was Scotch.

During the War of the Rebellion he served as a major of artillery in the Confederate army. It is related that in 1864 — the year in which, by the way, Hunter's raiders destroyed that part of Buchanan in which his house stood — Major Johnston was sent from Chattanooga to Atlanta for medical treatment. There he was the guest of Mr. John Paul Jones, whose sister, Mrs. Ballard, later established a school for girls. Naturally enough, when Mary, the oldest of the six Johnston children, and Eloise, her sister, grew up, they were put in Mrs. Ballard's care.

Miss Johnston has from her birth generally been in poor health. This physical weakness early developed in her a taste for books. Besides, her imagination was diligently cultivated by her father's mother, said to have been a woman of rare force and beauty of character, and of strong intel-

ligence, who, until her death, which happened when her granddaughter was eight, taught Mary much more than the average child ever learns. For several years afterward, Mary's aunt was her teacher; and later the child had a governess. "It was all very easy, desultory schooling," writes to us one who is exceptionally familiar with the author's career. "Her health was always frail, and there were many interruptions, but whether sick or well she was continually reading. There was no restriction laid upon her in this respect, and she read what she pleased — poetry, history, fiction — whatever came to her hand. Scott and Dickens she read and reread, and she early acquired a love for Shakespeare."

Indeed, after she had discovered some old documents in an out-of-the-way closet, and had constituted herself a sort of librarian, reading and arranging the writings

from morning to evening, it was predicted that she would yet write a book. A safe prediction, it proved to be; a much safer prediction than to say that a little girl who says her morning and evening prayers fervently will yet be a nun.

She was a self-reliant child, too. There is a story that runs:

"Once, when only six years old, happening to go too near an open grate, her dress took fire, and she was soon in a light blaze. She was alone; but, rolling herself in the hearth rug, she extinguished the flames, saying, when asked why she adopted such a method, that her grandmother had told her of a little girl who had wrapped herself up in a blanket on a similar occasion, and that she thought the rug would do as well."

"The distinguishing characteristic of the future author at this period," says the

one who tells the fire story, "was an unusual quantity of closely-curled yellow hair, a lock of which was clipped from her tiny head soon after her birth and sent as a sample to her maternal grandparents in West Virginia."

Meantime, since the close of the war, Major Johnston, a civil engineer by profession, had become interested in several railways in the South, and in 1885 his pressing business caused the removal of the family from Buchanan to Birmingham, Ala., where for the most part the Johnstons have since made their home. The year following the settlement in Birmingham Mary and her sister were sent to the Ballard school in Atlanta; but three months at school hurt Mary's health so severely that she returned to Birmingham, thenceforth to educate herself according to her own disposition. However, when,

in 1887, her mother died, Miss Johnston, notwithstanding her poor health, undertook the management of the household — a management which she exercises up to the present time.

The year after her mother's death Mary and her father visited Europe. This visit may be spoken of as a turning-point in her life, for notes on it, contributed to a little Virginia newspaper, made up her first literary offering. But, although she has moved hither and thither, Miss Johnston has spent at least a part of every year in Virginia — lately on Cobb's Island, a small spot just off the eastern shore. The hills and mountains of which she is so fond are prominent in the landscapes in "Prisoners of Hope," while the shores and marshes described in "To Have and to Hold" have familiarized themselves to the author during her periodical sojourns on Cobb's Island.

It is said that when Miss Johnston was a young girl she drew a crayon portrait of her father's brother, which "indicates the force with which her talents might have flowed in that channel had not another been cut for them by nature." We mention the portrait incident merely to emphasize the early rise of her independence and ambition. She was an uncommon child in many respects; but they who predicted that some day she would write a book judged her best. The prediction was realized during the winter of 1896.

For three years previously the Johnstons had gone to New York after leaving Virginia. In 1894 Mary virtually became an invalid. Forced to lie still, she read and studied until her mind craved recreation; then she took up her pencil. It will hardly surprise any reader to learn that her sentiments at first found expression in

verse, but metre and rhyme were driven away when the scheme of "Prisoners of Hope" presented itself. She wrote the story literally page by page. She was inexperienced in the art of constructing a story, and felt her way slowly, sensitively; besides, her health was frailer than ever, and the cares of the household still devolved upon her. So, the writing of her first novel occupied more than a year and a half. It was her secret. Surprise struck every member of the family when she exhibited the letter informing her that the story was acceptable. "Prisoners of Hope" was indeed successful, but it was its successor, "To Have and to Hold," that emblazoned Mary Johnston's name.

"To Have and to Hold" established a record in sales among books written lately by American women — a fact not to be depreciated by the extraordinary popularity

of Miss Runkle's "Helmet of Navarre." "To Have and to Hold" appeared in a field of unprecedentedly strong competitors. The work of virtually a new writer, it would have done well to finish inside the distance flag, to use the horseman's parlance; instead, however, of finishing thus modestly, it challenged the leader, and rightfully enough, for it had all the characteristics of a popular favorite. It is — we may still speak of it in the present tense — an extremely enjoyable story. The characters are vividly portrayed; the scenes fit together smoothly and naturally; the spirit of the times with which the story deals is well sustained. "To Have and to Hold," in short, is the work of a born story-teller. If we are to give assent to the opinion that a novel should be mere entertainment, then each of Miss Johnston's novels may be included in the best

of modern fiction, and, by the same token, the Virginian lady may be regarded as a very successful novelist. Her latest story, "Audrey," has been interesting as a serial. What it will prove to be as a book, shown among hundreds of other books seeking the favor of the public, is only to be conjectured.

We are indebted to a Southern friend for the following information:

"Miss Johnston's home in Birmingham is, in some respects, typical of the old homes of the South, without, however, suggesting the Colonial. It is set well back from the street, and the balconies and the exterior are decidedly attractive, and the filmy draperies at the long French windows suggest the charming sunlit apartments of a well-regulated home. The library where Miss Johnston does her work is lined with books. It is a long, attractive apartment, through the windows of which one gets a

broad view of the sky. Her desk lies open, and the morning's mail is scattered around.

"A black and gold clock ticks away on the mantel shelf. Above the bookcases are a number of marble busts. It is a room with the atmosphere of books and pictures. . . . The author is not very tall, and her figure is slender and fragile. She carries herself well and has that high-bred air that gives her a distinctive charm in any assembly. Her eyes are large and brown, with little flecks of gold. Her light brown hair is soft and wavy and she wears it simply. She dresses quietly and fashionably. Her tastes are those of a charming woman, who, although unconventional, respects every propriety. Briefly, her life is that of any high-bred, aristocratic girl of the South."

Miss Johnston's remarks to interviewers usually take this form: "I am glad to

talk of my work. I am, of course, gratified at its success and I appreciate all that is said, but I have made it a rule not to talk for publication."

ELLEN ANDERSON G. GLASGOW.

ELLEN ANDERSON G. GLASGOW

THE majority of readers unconsciously associate every author who has been born and bred south of Mason and Dixon's line with the depiction of life and character of the Southern people. It was, consequently, rather startling when there appeared a Virginian who knew northern life — even metropolitan life — as intimately as those who had been bred to it; a Virginian author who did not write of gay and valorous colonial cavaliers — who did unheard-of deeds of bravery and courted unquestionably beautiful, bepowdered, bequilted, and "Beshrew-me-gentle-Sir"-conversing damsels, — or of molly-cotton-tails, of foxes, and of other shy, retiring animals, who held as brilliant and intellectual con-

versation with each other as do the members of *The Players*. For this reason Miss Ellen Glasgow first drew attention to herself.

"The Descendant," a rather morbid exposition of the development and life of an intellectual hybrid, the offspring of a low woman and a highly intellectual man, was a story of distinct strength and character, in which there were touches of Stephen Crane, linked with biting sarcasm and with pessimistic wit. It appeared in 1899 and was the herald of more brilliancy to come. When we read that "Over the meadows the amber light of the afterglow fell like rain," there was something that reminded one quite forcibly of Crane's famous "amber-tinted river that purled along in whispering splendor," but there were other passages — in fact, many of them — which showed a depth of thought that was unusual and also the most pleasing of all

literary traits, that of deep scientific and philosophic reflection.

Although a Virginian, Miss Glasgow knew the atmosphere of New York literary Bohemia which pervaded "The Descendant" and likewise "The Phases of an Inferior Planet," her second venture, for she had frequently come and gone on its easy-going tide. The fact that her forebears upon her father's side were all lawyers, judges, and the like, is accountable for her love of literature and of the literary life. She was born in Richmond, Virginia, and has lived a great deal at a country home near by, where she developed a love for the country and for such natural things as earth and sky and the lesser animals, which is in great evidence in all her writings. As a child she was delicate, a fact that kept her from attending school with the other children, and perhaps accounted for the philo-

sophic manner in which she quite early regarded the progress of human events. Such learning as she received was won almost entirely by her own individual effort. The first simple step in reading and in writing she took unaided, and reading was not learned from school-books, but from long days spent over Scott's novels, when, spurred on by her delight in the stories which on winter evenings she had heard in the firelight from the lips of an elderly and affectionate aunt, she would spell out the words one by one. As she grew older, this love for books increased, and everything that she could lay her hands upon was absorbed with a greed that was insatiable. Of course, much fell into her hands that was unadulterated trash, but likewise much that had intrinsic merit. By the time she was thirteen she had learned to enjoy Robert Browning, and he has never lost the

first place among the poets, in her heart, although Swinburne is likewise a favorite.

Perhaps many children of unusual intellectuality have displayed an equal love for books, but in Miss Glasgow, the imaginative development soon took a scientific trend, which is quite unusual. At eighteen she began a systematic study of political economy and of socialism, which brought her mind to a serious point, where the imaginative flights, stimulated by fairy stories and by writers of romance, were held in check by the ponderous thoughts of the world's greatest men of science. One who is well qualified to speak says that "law, and the evolution of phenomena by means of law now became her point of view, and a viewpoint from which she has never swerved. In spite of this love and absorption of abstract sciences, her inborn love of stories has remained."

The most prominent characteristic of Miss Glasgow's personality is well shown by the following incident: In response to a request for her biography from a literary periodical, she wrote: "I remember once trying to write a sketch of my life and getting as far as 'I was born.' To this day I have found nothing more to add; and surely to be born is no difficult accomplishment. Apart from this I have made it a rule never to publish personal things; — not that I am peculiarly modest or even painfully dull, but, if the truth must be told, even my friends admit that I never say anything interesting about myself." This modesty is paramount, and it is for this reason that she is seldom seen in society. Society does not attract the majority of literary people, — some, perhaps, as a means for the study of human eccentricities, — for there is much else for them

to be thinking about. Miss Glasgow is no exception to the rule. She is quiet and reserved in the company of others, although when her interest or sympathy is awakened, the ready Southern cordiality warms her manner.

The knowledge of the law of evolution and the study of Spencer, of Darwin and the other great scientists, she says, has been one of the greatest pleasures of her existence. Long before she fully grasped the significance of the law of evolution, she felt, rather than realized, the close relationship between man and beast. Her love of animals is paramount. Even the birds of the air are her pets; and their clamor at her window often sends her flying from her desk to the pantry, to secure the supply of crumbs they have learned to expect from her hands. This love of hers is combined with an interest that is all-absorbing. The

habits, the actions, the different characteristics of this lower animal world interest her beyond measure, on account of their analogies to the higher life of man, here paralleled in miniature.

She had begun to scribble verses by the time she could read in words of two syllables, and while yet a mere girl wrote an entire novel which she had good judgment and tact enough not to afflict upon some struggling publisher's literary advisor. Although her first success came with "The Descendant" (finished before her twenty-second birthday) she had written other articles before and they had been published in magazines. Success did not come easily; she had always worked hard, both with brain and with pen, and she still writes with care — and continually.

From her very soul, she has remarked, she believes the true success is to labor."

This infinite care and painstaking endeavor was well evinced in certain passages of her third book, "The Voice of the People," a story of her own Virginia and its curious class distinctions. The familiarity and accuracy with which the working of party machinery was given in minute detail, exhibited a careful and conscientious study of political ways and means. We are told that as early as 1897, when the plot for the story was first beginning to take shape in her mind, she drove more than twenty miles over the mountains, and in the hottest of August weather, in order to sit through two days of a Democratic convention which had been called in order to nominate a governor. She was smuggled in at the stage door of the opera house, where the convention was held, through friendly influence, and sat upon the stage surrounded by delegates from all parts of the State.

She and her companion were the only women in the building. By close observation she was thus able to give an inside view of political life, the truth and consistency of which could be vouched for by actual facts.

The influence of her favorite book, "The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius," a book which she is never without, — for it accompanies her even upon her travels, — was well shown in "The Voice of the People." The characters — all of them contemporary Virginians — were clearly delineated in a pungently philosophical vein, that exhibited the influence of the master mind which looked at reasons and motives and at broader questions than mere petty vainglory and personal ambition. Her powers of observation were here at their maximum of efficiency because this was her own native heath; and the characters were those

with whom she was more at home than with the over-educated and morbidly sensitive men and women who lived and died with "The Descendant" and drew breath in her "Phases of an Inferior Planet."

The scene of the first half of the later novel was laid at Kingsborough, — readily recognized as Williamsburgh, Va., — a town which "dozed through the present to dream of the past, and found the future a nightmare," and the latter half in Miss Glasgow's native town of Richmond. The characters too were those she knew from childhood. There was the old Judge, a genuine and noble Virginian gentleman, "from his classic head to his ill-fitting boots"; General Battle, "a colonel during the war but raised to the rank of general by the unanimous vote of his neighbors on his return home"; Miss Chris, his amiable sister, who had never surrendered and was "happy for forty

years with a broken heart"; Eugenia, a sweet and capable heroine; and the hero, Nick Burr, a rufus-headed son of the people, a member of that well-known Southern sect known as the "poh white trash," yet with genuine ability and infinite perseverance. His progress from the shiftless ranks in which he was born to the powerful upper class of the gentry, constituted the motive and force of the tale. From the time when he interrupted a conversation between the kind-hearted Judge and his own tobacco-chewing father with the remark that "There 's nothin' in farmin', I 'd ruther be a judge,' to the moment when he reached the governmental chair, by means of his own sterling merit and indomitable will, the progress of Nick Burr was replete with those perfectly human and logical events which belong to the life of the individual who is determined to be in

the front ranks of those who enter the fierce political strife. It was "the survival of the fittest" exemplified in present-day Virginian life.

The negro element was of course subordinate, but lent a picturesque background and furnished some wit and still more humor. There were Uncle Ish and Aunt Verbeny, who gave vent to many delightful bits of unintellectual philosophy. One was that it was evident that it was a civil war, because when the Yankees rode up to the house and their hostess came out smiling and giving them welcome, they stood there bowing and scraping, and it was "Es civil as if dey 'd come a' cotin'."

With "The Voice of the People" Miss Glasgow had remained at home, and it was good that she had done so. She had written the manuscript only when in the

mood for it, and it was therefore well done, and thoroughly well done. Her method of work is to write when the spirit is upon her, and then to write as long as she feels physically and mentally fit; thus her periods of work vary from one to three, four and often twelve hours a day, although the latter is quite unusual. "The Descendant" was written in a year, but she worked at it fitfully, sometimes leaving off for a full month. To each of the two subsequent books she devoted two years of study and of careful preparation.

At present she is engaged in the construction of a novel dealing with the Civil War and the Virginian life of that period. It is to treat not only of the events which transpired during the four years of conflict, but also of those just previous to the outbreak of hostilities. From one who is such a careful and exact reasoner it will be in-

teresting to view the final resultant, and see whether or not it will be colored with partisan feeling or will give a broad and unbiased opinion of those events which are still fresh in the memories of many Virginians. In view of the recent triumph of "The Crisis," the outcome will be most interesting to the world of letters.

BERTHA RUNKLE

THE "Helmet of Navarre" was a remarkable book for many reasons, but the fact that its author was little over twenty years of age was not the most remarkable. Bryant had written "Thanatopsis" before he had reached that age, and Elizabeth Stuart Phelps composed "The Gates Ajar" at nineteen. The most interesting fact about the production of "The Helmet of Navarre" is, that its author has never even caught a glimpse of the shores of France; indeed, she has seldom been beyond the boundaries of New York State. The castles in which royalty here disported were true castles in the air. In considering the book, therefore, we view what may be accomplished

by long-distance flights of the imagination.

Miss Bertha Runkle is a product of the literary atmosphere of New York combined with the healthy and muscle-giving properties of golf and of tennis; thus disproving the oft-quoted and quite prevalent theory that literary minds and frail bodies are inseparably linked together. Although the State of New Jersey is associated in the minds of most of us with sand-flats, mosquitoes and malaria, it has the honor of claiming the birthplace of the newest addition to American expounders of historical romance. The mind of Miss Bertha Runkle was first stimulated to literary expression at Berkeley Heights, New Jersey; a small place, a quiet place, and a distinctly suburban place; but in 1888 she and her mother moved to New York, where association with a more swiftly moving environment than that of a back-

country town, did much to brighten an intellect which already showed signs of a brilliancy quite out of the ordinary. Her love of the good things in literature indeed comes honestly, for her father, Cornelius A. Runkle, who died when she was a young girl, was a well-known New York lawyer and for many years counsel for the *New York Tribune*, and her mother was, previous to her marriage, an editorial writer on the same paper; the first American woman, in fact, to be on the staff of a great metropolitan daily.

When a very small child the author of "The Helmet of Navarre" showed distinct signs of romantic promise, for, while other infants were cooing sweet words of wisdom and of pseudo-love to dolls of paper and of wax, she was amusing herself by compiling stories and by beginning to write them down.

With true Celtic genius, however, she would tire of them about the third chapter, and begin another one. Again, note the early expression of the real, artistic nature.

Such education as it was her pleasure to be subjected to was first received at home and then at a fashionable New York boarding-school, where yellow-backed novels were more popular than the works of Thackeray and Carlyle. This story-writing trick of hers, however, still remained, and in some way offset the moral degeneracy into which such dissipations as an over-indulgence in five-pound boxes of Huyler's or Mallard's, and in the matinee, threatened to plunge her. In 1893 her mother purchased a small piece of land at Onteora, Tannersville, N. Y., and upon it built a house where she and her daughter have lived every summer. It is here that Miss Runkle has followed the life of the typical American girl one sees in the

centre pages in *Life*, and learned not only how to write a successful novel, but also how to swing a golf club, ride a wheel, drive a cart, and, in spite of endless skirts, play an excellent game of tennis. The virility which infused the pages of her first book was but the virility of her own nature. Spencer has said, "The book is the man himself." Here is an excellent proof of the saying — only this time it is a woman.

When Miss Runkle received a letter saying that her story would first be published in *The Century Magazine* and enclosing a check for serial rights, a smile of intense satisfaction passed over her face, as she held out the check for her mother to see; and the subsequent developments which the manuscript evolved when it appeared in printed form, have left that smile in possession of her features.

One of the first things she did with her

newly-acquired wealth was to purchase a pony and cart. The pony was "a very little one," but she made him extremely well acquainted with the mountain roads, and when the summer was over and it grew cold in Onteora, — too cold, in fact, for comfort, — she drove her mother all the way to New York. It took three whole days and they both enjoyed it. The pony's name is "Peggy," short for Pegasus.

There is nothing of the blue-stocking, the Chautauquan assembly camp-stooler, the W. C. T. U. woman, or the intellectual hyena about Miss Runkle. In her own words, she says she "dislikes extremely being looked at as a literary freak." If you should see her driving around Onteora in a short skirt, with her hair hanging down her back in two thick braids, you would never suspect that she is the author of one of the most popular

novels of the past year, nor would you suspect it if you saw her dancing at one of the Inn's informal hops. She is as simple, as wholesome, as genuine, as any American girl. She has always been extremely fond of history, biography, memoirs, and the like, so the study of "The Helmet of Navarre" was part of the fun. She had the story in her mind for two years or so, and the actual writing took about four months; but she didn't put all her time upon it — the mornings only; the afternoons were spent out of doors.

The title of "The Helmet of Navarre" was taken from a passage in Lord Macaulay's "Ivry," which its author adopted as a motto:

Press where ye see my white plume shine
amidst the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme to-day, the helmet of
Navarre.

The book came out with a great shouting, a banging of drums, blaring of trumpets, and tons of advertising, and it was not a book that one could easily ignore, for great black letters heralding its power, its beauty, and its great worth stared at one from the pages of every newspaper and magazine. In fact, a line in large letters upon the paper wrapper of the very book itself, quoted a contemporary to the effect that "any writer of any age might rejoice in its equal." For this reason many read it who would not have otherwise done so, and the effect, on the whole, was very agreeable.

The reader began with expectation of immediately seeing the king, or at least catching a glimpse of his plume, or his horse's heels, but such was not the case. The author's restraint in not at once hurling this fiery meteor among the lesser con-

stellations, inspired gratitude. Fictional kings are extremely difficult things to manage. Like the queen in "Alice in Wonderland," they are either continually in the way, or else are always thundering "Off with his, or her, head!" For this reason Miss Runkle showed judicious foresight and a sense of the artistic that was very commendable, but his cause was at the bottom of the events which were primarily introduced. The power of the League and of Monsieur de Mayenne was dying and Henry was about to ascend the throne, when the story began. The great Duc de St. Quentin was Henry's staunch partisan and had come up to Paris to flaunt his loyalty in the face of Mayenne. Felix Broux, servitor of the aforesaid, was the hero of the tale, and came to Paris at the same time, and immediately became involved in a number of plots, counter-

plots, escapades, fights and brawls, that have happened to the innumerable fictional heroes of the France of that period, from the famous musketeers of Dumas to the rollicking blades of Stanley Weyman. The intrigue in which the youthful hero became implicated, was as complicated as the windings of the maze, from the looking-glass intricacies of which the gullible visitor pays a delicate sum to be extracted. The Duc de St. Quentin and his son, the Comte de Mar, had become estranged through the villainies of one Lucas, who was employed as the Duke's secretary, but was in reality a nephew of Mayenne and a spy of the League. Felix Broux and the Comte de Mar became warm friends and moved from one peril to another with a cheerful indifference to sudden death that gladdened the heart. The former was the means of bringing about a recon-

ciliation and understanding between father and son, and of exposing the evil machinations of Lucas, and thereafter served de Mar with unfailing loyalty and unswerving purpose. Lucas, who was the evil genius of the tale, time and time again wove plot after plot with trigonometrical precision, but the St. Quentins, who were ever upon the brink of destruction, always managed to extricate themselves with the dexterity of a Sherlock Holmes.

The love episodes were furnished by the Comte de Mar and a ward of the Duc de Mayenne, Lorance de Montluc. Lorance eventually escaped from her guardian's house, and made a journey on foot to her lover in the camp of the Bearnais at St. Denis, and the book ended with the customary union of two fond and loving hearts. There were the usual number of snares, secret passages, mysterious inns,

and rascally landlords, and, *of course*, many sparks from whizzing swords. The fact that the author eschewed the local color that is generally supposed to exist in turns of speech, in "characteristic" oaths and exclamations, such as, "By the second little finger of the Knight of Saint Madrid," "Ventre Saint Gris," etc., was decidedly a point in her favor. The few that were used had no taint of artifice, and the merit was everywhere in evidence.

Considered, then, as an entity, "The Helmet of Navarre" was not "the most remarkable work of present-day fiction," as its publishers would have us believe, but a very creditable bit of writing, especially for an author who had not yet reached the quarter-century mark; and one which was read by a great many people simply from the fact of its having been vigorously brought to their attention. But the fact that

it was the product of the American girl that we are so proud of, the American girl who can fish, and shoot, and do and dare, is its greatest merit. *Vive la femme Americaine!*

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